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'King Hassan to visit Jerusalem soon'

TEL AVIV (AP) — Morocco's King Hassan II was expected to visit Israel and occupied Jerusalem in the next two weeks, a newspaper reported Tuesday. He would be highest ranking Arab leader to visit in more than a decade. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin stopped in Morocco last week on his way back from a ceremony in Washington where an historic peace accord was signed with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Israel but no dates were set. The English-language Jerusalem Post, quoting unidentified sources in the Israeli parliament, said King Hassan was expected in about 10 days. Moroccan-born parliament members have in the past played an important role in establishing contacts between Morocco and Israel. "This is the first I'm hearing about this," Mr. Rabin's spokesman Gad Ben-Ari said of report. "We know nothing about it." The Post quoted foreign ministry officials as declining comment. Foreign Minister Shimon Peres visited Rabat when he was prime minister in 1986. Morocco also played a key behind-the-scenes role in negotiations leading to the Israel-Egypt peace treaty signed in 1979.

Comoros Islands join Arab League

CAIRO (AP) — The Arab League has accepted the Indian Ocean Comoro Islands group as its 22nd member state, Secretary-General Esmat Abul Meguid welcomed the archipelago, officially the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros, in comments Tuesday marking the end of a three-day Arab League meeting of foreign ministers. The Comoros applied for Arab League membership a year after gaining independence from France in 1975, said Ibrahim Abdullah Ibrahim, its ambassador to Cairo. He said the request was not considered then because of scant information on the island republic. The Comoros repeated the request this year, Mr. Ibrahim said. With a population of about 500,000, the Comoros are expected to benefit from Arab oil wealth with its inclusion in the Pan-Arab body. The country's per capita income is about \$320, and the group of three islands remains heavily dependent on foreign aid.

Arafat receives first letter from Clinton

TUNIS (R) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) received the first letter from U.S. President Bill Clinton to Chairman Yasser Arafat on Tuesday, a PLO statement said. "In the letter... the U.S. president sent his appreciation and greetings to Chairman Abu Ammar," it said. "The letter also covered matters related to the future of the peace process and American-Palestinian bilateral relations." U.S. Ambassador John McCarthy gave the letter to Hakam Balawi, the PLO ambassador to Tunisia and a member of the PLO leadership, at their second meeting within a week.

Arafat says his wife not pregnant

AMMAN (J.T.) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat Tuesday denied his wife was pregnant. "Not yet," said a smiling Arafat when asked about reports carried in the Tunisian press that his wife, Suha, 30, was pregnant. Sitting next to Mr. Arafat, His Majesty King Hussein of Jordan, 64, was talking to reporters at Marka airport before leaving after a two-day visit.

Iran: No talk of raising U.K. ties

NICOSIA (AP) — A senior Iranian official was quoted Tuesday as saying Tehran has not discussed upgrading ties with London for the time being. Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmoud Vaezi also acknowledged that his country's death decree against author Salman Rushdie was the greatest obstacle to better relations. Mr. Vaezi was interviewed by the English-language Tehran Times as Sir Michael Burton, Britain's under-secretary of state for foreign affairs, was concluding a visit to Iran.

18 shot dead in Johannesburg

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Eighteen taxi commuters were shot dead Tuesday on a road south of Johannesburg, hours after an earlier attack in the same area claimed six lives, police said. Police spokesman Major Eugene Opperman said the 18 people were killed and 14 others injured in the attack which occurred at 6.30 p.m. (1630 GMT). No other details were immediately available. In the earlier attack, six people died when the minibus taxi they were travelling in was fired upon by gunmen lying in ambush on the side of a road in Alrode, an industrial area south of Johannesburg.

U.N. tells Afghans to improve security

KABUL (R) — United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Sadako Ogata has urged Afghan authorities on Monday to improve the security situation at home if they wanted international support for their war-ravaged country. Mr. Ogata stressed the point during her meetings with Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani and government ministers during a one-day visit to Kabul Monday. UNHCR officials said. She stressed to Mr. Rabbani that the UNHCR was keen to do what it could to improve conditions for Afghan war refugees returning home from neighbouring Pakistan and Iran, the official said. But she told Mr. Rabbani that the security situation must improve for this to happen.

Two Frenchmen killed in Algiers

ALGIERS (AFP) — Two Frenchmen were found dead Tuesday morning in Sidi Belabes, west Algeria, becoming the first foreign nationals to die in Algerian unrest, the national agency APS said quoting official sources. Francois Boutelet, 32, and Emanuel Didon, 25, who were working as surveyors for a French company in Algeria, were seized Monday as they were travelling to work by a "terrorist group," according to the source, using a term reserved for armed Muslim fundamentalists. It is the first time that foreign nationals have been killed in Algeria since the start of clashes between security forces and armed fundamentalists which began in January 1992.

King, Arafat set ground for closer ties

Talks produce 'solid foundation for coordination based on trust and confidence'

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein said Tuesday two days of talks here with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat had cleared the ground for closer Jordanian-Palestinian coordination in implementing the Israeli-Palestinian peace accord.

Speaking to the press at Marka airport shortly before seeing Mr. Arafat off, the King described his discussions with the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as highly fruitful and said they produced a "solid foundation for coordination based on mutual trust and confidence."

"The decision of the Palestinian leadership was courageous in addressing the needs of the Palestinian nation and indeed the Arab Nation," said the King, referring to the groundbreaking Israel-PLO agreement signed in Washington on Sept. 13.

"We reiterate total and unequivocal support for our Palestinian brothers and their independent will in decision-making," the King said. "We support it out of a sense of responsibility and concern for future generations."



His Majesty King Hussein confers with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat shortly before the latter's departure from Amman Tuesday. Also seeing off

Mr. Arafat were His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali and senior officials (Photo by Youssef Al 'Allam)

"The visit of President Arafat was good a chance for me to meet my dear brother in his second home and among his people," said the King, adding that his talks with the PLO chairman dealt with "everything as they should be."

Describing Jordan-PLO relations as "beyond the limits of coordination and unity," the King said: "I am very comfortable with the atmosphere."

Mr. Arafat, on his first visit to Jordan after the signing of the Israel-PLO accord on Palestinian autonomy, profusely thanked the King for his endorsement of the agreement and support for the Palestinians.

"I would like to repeat to King Hussein, our guide to our bright common future, that he has been of great support to the Palestinian people," he said. "I am very grateful, thank you, thank you, thank you in the name of our people, our children, the children of stones, our revolutionaries, our fighters, our women, our

masses who are your masses and your people."

"We are one family, and we are proud of this bond that unites us with the special relations between us," he said.

Mr. Arafat described his discussions with the King as "intimate, brotherly, special, strong and solid" and said the talks "will advance us towards new horizons in the near future."

Both leaders indicated that differences over the accord, if any, were a thing of the past and that Jordan and the PLO were now looking forward for a new era of cooperation and coordination.

The King and Mr. Arafat did not delve into details of their vision of interaction to ensure that the Israel-PLO accord would indeed lead to a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace settlement addressing all dimensions of the decades-old conflict.

But PLO Executive Committee member Yasser Abed Rabbo later reported that Jordan had agreed to all requests that the PLO made in order to facilitate the implementation of the Israel-PLO accord (see separate story).

Mr. Arafat, who arrived here Monday to a warm welcome, later flew out to Cairo in a Royal Jordanian executive jet. Later reports said the PLO chairman (Continued on page 10)

PLO official confirms Jordanian promise to offer all assistance

AMMAN — Jordan has responded positively to Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) requests for assistance in the fields of security, training and organisation in the run-up to the implementation of the Israel-PLO agreement on Palestinian autonomy, a senior PLO official confirmed Tuesday.

Yasser Abed Rabbo, a member of the PLO Executive Committee, addressing a press conference shortly after PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat flew out after two days of talks with His Majesty King Hussein (see separate story), gave a highly upbeat assessment and prediction of Jordanian-Palestinian coordination in the Middle East peace process.

He said the work of joint Jordanian-Palestinian committees will be speeded up and will deal with all aspects of coordination.

"We have found Jordanian sincerity and willingness to provide support, encouragement and expertise," he said. "The door is now open for closer coordination in all areas and fields and this will be discussed by the joint committees."

Mr. Abed Rabbo, chief of the PLO's Information Department and a close confidant of Mr. Arafat said the Palestinian self-rule authority envisaged under the Sept. 13 Israel-PLO accord would insist on as much economic and political independence as possible from Israel despite the Jewish state's stranglehold on the occupied territories.

He indicated, however, that the Palestinian options were limited, given the dependence of the occupied territories on Israeli infrastructure and economy brought about by 27 years of occupation.

(Continued on page 10)

Settlers, Palestinians clash in Jerusalem

Combined agency dispatches

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Jewish settlers clashed with Palestinians in the narrow streets of the Old City here Tuesday after gathering at the western wall to pray for Israel to be "saved" from the Palestinian autonomy accord.

Before marching through the streets of the Muslim quarter, thousands of Jewish settlers packed the wall to voice their opposition to the autonomy deal signed last week in Washington.

Rabbis sounded silver trumpets as the wall - echoed to verses of the Bible.

The settlers then set out for the Muslim quarter, where battles broke out with Palestinians, an AFP photographer reported.

A settler who ripped down a Palestinian flag was set upon by Palestinians and badly beaten, provoking fist fights.

The protesters planned to march from the Muslim quarter of the Old City to parliament where Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin opened a marathon debate on the autonomy deal earlier in the day.

Settlers have built a stage outside the parliament for a mass rally under the slogan "Israel is in danger." Two thousand police have been mobilised to control the protest.

New 'Jewish' quarter

Conflicting reports have emerged over whether city authorities gave their approval for the construction of a new Jewish quarter in a Palestinian neighbourhood of East Jerusalem.

Israel Radio said the authority had approved for construction of 150 housing units and a hotel in the Bas Al Amud neighbourhood.

But a spokesman for the Jerusalem council denied the report and told AFP that the authority had yet to approve the construction of a Jewish quarter.

Lawyer shot dead

A prominent Palestinian lawyer in the Gaza Strip was assassinated Monday as he returned from a meeting of supporters of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)-Israel peace deal, Palestinian officials said.

Mohammed Ahi Shaaban, 36, an activist in Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction of the PLO, was gunned down by masked assassins who hopped the road with their cars as he drove away from the meeting in Gaza City.

Mr. Shaaban was the first prominent Palestinian assassin-

Knesset begins raucous debate on PLO deal; Netanyahu wants polls

Combined agency dispatches

TEL AVIV — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, saying there has been "enough tears and enough bloodshed," Tuesday appealed to a divided parliament for a vote of confidence on the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord.

Mr. Rabin was assured of only a slim majority, and Labour Party leaders were negotiating behind-the-scenes in attempts to persuade undecided religious lawmakers to support the plan.

The marathon debate, one of the stormiest ever in parliament, could go around the clock for three days.

Opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu warned of a "sea of tears" and appealed for a national election.

The threatened desertion of a small religious party left Mr. Rabin expecting no more than a razor-thin 61-59 backing for the "Gaza-Jericho first" plan for interim Palestinian self-rule in the occupied territories.

But Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who signed the accord in Washington last week, told reporters: "I feel more comfortable with 61 and having peace than with 59 and losing peace. That's my comfort."

The vote was not expected before Wednesday evening. All 120 members of Parliament will be allowed to speak. Mr. Rabin faced raucous right-wing heckling when he opened the debate.

"The government will ask the Knesset's approval and will see in the Knesset decision a sort of expression of confidence in the government and its decisions," the prime minister declared.

"After 100 years of violence and terror, after wars and suffering, there is today a great prospect for a new chapter in the history of the state of Israel."

The government was officially seeking support for its entire peace policy, including recognition of the PLO, limited self-rule for Palestinians in Jericho and the Gaza Strip and an agenda on peace talks agreed with Jordan.

Mr. Rabin, assuring Israelis there were no secret understandings with the PLO, said he had insisted it end its armed struggle.

"We who fought you, the Palestinians, tell you today in a clear voice - enough of the tears and the blood, enough. We have no hatred towards you... we are today giving a chance to peace."

About 2,000 riot-equipped police deployed outside the Knesset to handle rallies by opponents and backers of the accord.

Inside the hall, tempers ran so high that hecklers drowned out large portions of nationally broadcast speeches by Mr. Rabin and Likud leader Netanyahu.

Guards escorted a spectator out of the visitors' gallery after a Palestinian flag was unfurled, touching off protests by lawmakers.

Mr. Rabin himself walked out of the hall three-quarters of the way through Mr. Netanyahu's speech, after the Likud leader accused him of burying his head in the sand. Israel Television, reading Mr. Rabin's lips, said the prime minister admonished Mr. Netanyahu to "be a little more polite," before his exit.

In a 70-minute speech, Mr. Netanyahu called for new elections to test public support for the plan.

Mr. Netanyahu accused Mr. Rabin of laying the groundwork for Palestinian statehood, which is opposed by both major parties.

"It is our historic obligation to try and prevent what could bring disaster to Israel," he added.

"This is an hour of goodwill, of great possibilities, and we will do everything not to miss it," Mr. Rabin said in defending the accord.

Yeltsin dissolves assembly, clashes head on with rivals

Combined agency dispatches

MOSCOW — President Boris Yeltsin announced in a dramatic address Tuesday that he was dissolving his rebellious parliament and warned opponents not to resist his action.

Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi, Mr. Yeltsin's arch foe in a power struggle, described the move as an "open coup" and said he was taking the reins of power.

Parliament chief Ruslan Khasbulatov urged troops to disobey Mr. Yeltsin's orders.

"This putsch will collapse with a crash," Mr. Khasbulatov said.

"Combat action is not to be excluded," Mr. Rutskoi told reporters. "We must act now to stop the slide to civil war."

Mr. Yeltsin set legislative elections for Dec. 11-12, 1993.

The Russian government gave its "unconditional support" to Mr. Yeltsin, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said.

Mr. Chernomyrdin told journalists in his office: "I shall implement the government's objectives and President Yeltsin's decrees."

He said the heads of the interior, security and defence

ministries had expressed their support for Mr. Yeltsin's decision to dissolve parliament.

Under the Yeltsin decree the government assumes all the responsibilities of the Russian parliament, including control of the central bank and the legal system.

Earlier the Russian parliament's powerful administrative body voted to suspend Mr. Yeltsin, who has decreed the dissolution of parliament and early elections.

"Boris Yeltsin is no longer president because he has breached article 121.6 of the constitution," the presidium ruled.

"As of now, Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi has taken over his (Yeltsin's) powers," the presidium said at a meeting attended by journalists.

The presidium named Mr. Rutskoi, who has become a bitter Yeltsin rival, as interim president for three months and gave him full powers.

In Washington, President Bill Clinton said the power struggle in Russia shows the former communist nation was "coming to grips" with what it means to be a democracy.

Jordan far from settling water rights with Israel

By Rana Sabbagh
Reuters

AMMAN — Parched Jordan still has a long way to go before settling long-disputed water rights with Israel under a Middle East peace deal, officials said.

Water is a key point on a Jordanian-Israeli agenda initiated last week outlining components for an eventual peace pact.

Informal bilateral working groups and wider multilateral talks which will eventually involve Syria and Lebanon are also trying to hammer out the issue.

"We can safely say no progress has been achieved in these informal groups over and above what the common agenda has achieved," Munther Haddadin, the Kingdom's chief water negotiator, told Reuters in an interview on Monday.

Israel and Jordan have made more progress on other issues in their 23-month-old

talks, including a joint commitment to respect borders.

Jordan, a mostly desert country of four million people, is facing a looming water crisis due to a population boom and rapidly-growing numbers of farms and industries.

Jordan says that Israel, which together with Syria shares the key 40-kilometre Yarmouk River, a tributary of the Jordan River, is using more water than it is entitled to.

Officials say salinity has increased due to Israeli and Syrian diversions which have drawn down water levels.

Mr. Haddadin and others declined to say how much Amman wants back.

But some officials said a 1955 plan drawn up by former U.S. envoy Eric Johnston on the exploitation of Jordan River tributaries by Jordan, Lebanon, Israel and Syria gave Jordan and the West Bank 720 million cubic metres (25.4 billion cubic

feet) annually.

It allocated 567 million cubic metres (20 million cubic feet) to Israel, 132 million cubic metres (4.7 billion cubic feet) to Syria and 35 million cubic metres (1.2 billion cubic feet) to Lebanon from the basin waters.

Jordan and Palestinians will eventually have to work out a division of their water share after the ratio is defined.

The officials did not address the issue of whether the 1955 plan should be updated for much different population figures.

Water officials say Jordan now receives only 120 million cubic metres (4.2 billion cubic feet) annual from the rivers, while Israel and Syria are getting at least 737 million cubic metres (26 billion cubic feet) and 170 million cubic metres (6 billion cubic feet) respectively.

Jordan and Israel set up three informal working

groups to draw up a sub-agenda for negotiations on water, energy and the environment, borders and security, refugees and economic matters after working out most details of their agenda last October.

They have started informal discussions on what items should be included in the draft sub-agenda dealing with water, energy and the environment, officials said.

"We have been trying throughout the last three rounds to further define topics for negotiations related to water, energy and environment," Mr. Haddadin said.

Officials said both had been hampered in the past by having to wait for the Palestinians, who signed a self-rule deal with Israel last week, to make progress before they could reach agreements with the Jewish state.

A key unresolved point is the Jordanian demand for further safeguards at Israel's Damona nuclear plant near the ceasefire line to prevent environmental pollution, they said.

Officials say Amman could gain from many regional post-peace projects, including a plan to develop the Jordan rift valley.

A Jordanian-proposed multi-billion-dollar water canal linking the Dead Sea with the Red Sea would help the Kingdom develop the desolate Wadi Araba region.

Mr. Haddadin, who supervised most of Jordan's irrigation and water projects over the last two decades, said the Kingdom was asking for restored water rights from the shared rivers. Compensation for damages and future cooperation.

"We believe integrity of the Jordan River basin has to be restored and respected. All parties to the basin have rights to the use of its waters in an equitable fashion."

Iran concerned over situation in Kashmir

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani expressed concern during talks with Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao over the situation in strife-torn Kashmir, the local press said Tuesday.

Mr. Rafsanjani, in his first round of talks with Mr. Rao here Monday, was quoted as saying he wanted "the problems in Kashmir to be settled in a way that would not affect India's relations with the Muslim World."

"We are not satisfied with the present situation in Kashmir and do not believe the continuation of this trend would be in the interest of Indian people and their image," he said.

More than 7,000 people have died in Kashmir. India's only Muslim-majority state, in a Muslim secessionist revolt which erupted in 1989.

The Iranian president offered Iran's services as a mediator to help clarify "misunderstandings" between India and Pakistan, which claims sovereignty over Kashmir.

India accuses Pakistan of arming and training Muslim militants in Kashmir, a charge which Islamabad denies.

The Iranian president expressed hope that the resolution of the Kashmir problem would lead to future cooperation between the two countries.

Mr. Rao told Mr. Rafsanjani that the situation in Kashmir was "an internal problem" and India would pursue negotiations with Pakistan to resolve the issue.

Kinkel tells Ciller he backs citizenship for Turks in Germany

BONN (R) — Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel told Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller Tuesday he favoured her country's call for dual nationality for Germany's large Turkish minority to assist integration here.

Mr. Kinkel's small liberal party, the Free Democrats (FDP), backs the concept of dual citizenship but its larger coalition partner, Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats (CDU), opposes it.

He also supported Ankara's desire for a ban on expelled Kurds groups linked to the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK). The PKK has waged a war for independence in southeastern Turkey in which about 6,300 people have been killed since 1984.

Germany has 1.8 million Turks, many born in this country, but it makes it extremely difficult for them to become citizens and be accepted. Eight Turks have been burned to death since November by neo-Nazis who want Germany cleared of all foreigners.

"Turks living in Germany should be given every possibility of integrating. That includes dual nationality and the right for foreigners to vote in local elections," a foreign ministry statement quoted Mr. Kinkel as saying.

It added: "It is intolerable that the PKK abuses our hospitality in this way."

Kurdish militants occupied consulates and Turkish government offices in several European centres in June in an unprecedented raid.

About 120 Kurdish activists held a peaceful march under heavy police guard near the chancellery in Bonn Tuesday to protest against Ms. Ciller's three-day visit.

On Monday, several hundred protesters waving Kurdish flags and chanting "end the massacre in Kurdistan" clashed with police. Five people were injured and two arrested.

Ms. Ciller, Turkey's first woman leader, had breakfast with German business leaders before meeting Mr. Kinkel.

Ms. Ciller's working breakfast focused on her efforts to boost bilateral trade and German interest in her plan to privatise Turkey's huge and ailing state industrial sector.

A fluent German speaker, she met German bankers on Monday and was due to fly to Berlin later on Tuesday for talks with Birgit Breuer, head of the Treuhand agency set up by Bonn to privatise state enterprises in what used to be East Germany.

Ms. Ciller and Chancellor Kohl agreed Monday to set up a committee to discuss neo-Nazi attacks and citizenship rights for Germany's 1.8 million Turkish residents.

Ms. Ciller attended a benefit concert on Monday for victims of racist attacks at a convent on an island in the Rhine River near Bonn.

Egg hits Rabin's car; Israeli detained

TEL AVIV (AP) — An egg was thrown at Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's car Monday after a rally, and it struck the roof without causing damage or injury, Israel Radio reported. Police detained a 25-year-old Israeli man as a suspect after the assault in Beit Shemesh, which is several kilometres south of Jerusalem, the radio said.

It was unclear whether Mr. Rabin was in the car when the egg was thrown. The incident underscored the divisions in Israel over a peace agreement signed with the Palestine Liberation Organisation in Washington a week ago. Parliament was launching a marathon debate of the plan on Tuesday, and Mr. Rabin is assured of only a slim majority of 61 in the 120-member legislature, with some religious lawmakers demanding a referendum.

Israeli, PLO envoys meet in New York

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Israel's ambassador and the Palestinian observer to the United Nations opened a direct dialogue Monday and discussed revising General Assembly resolutions critical of the Jewish state, the Israeli mission said, Nasser Al Kidwa of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) met with Ambassador Gad Yaacobi at a New York restaurant. It was the first time Israel's ambassador had met the U.N. observer, said Avner Tavori, the Israeli U.N. mission's spokesman. He said the two discussed revising General Assembly resolutions "to match the recent changes in the Middle East." They also discussed a General Assembly resolution to be introduced by Russia and the United States appealing for economic and social help for the Gaza Strip and Jericho, where Palestinian self-rule is to begin under an agreement signed last week in Washington. The General Assembly session opened Tuesday. Mr. Kidwa said last week the PLO would consider changes in several U.N. resolutions critical of Israel.

Two killed by security forces in Algeria

ALGIERS (AFP) — Two armed Muslim fundamentalists were killed by security forces during a control check on the Algiers to Oran train, the Algerian security services said. One of the two men was killed Saturday morning as he tried to open fire on the security forces. The other was killed trying to escape. Two automatic pistols and a hand grenade were found following the operation. Some 17 people, including six security agents, four civilians and seven armed Muslim fundamentalists, have been killed since last Tuesday in Algeria.

Sudanese protest U.S. terrorist charge

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Several hundred Sudanese staged a demonstration here on Monday to protest against last month's move by the United States to blacklist Sudan as a state supporting terrorism. It was the fifth such protest since the Aug. 18 decision by the U.S. State Department to include Sudan along with Cuba, Iran, Libya and Syria on the list of states sponsoring international terrorism. The demonstrators were responding to an appeal broadcast by the state-owned media for southern Sudanese to turn out for an anti-U.S. rally here. There are some 1.5 million southern Sudanese living in the capital Khartoum. Beating African drums and hearing placards, the crowd marched to the U.S. embassy where they submitted statements of protest. The U.S. allegation followed intelligence reports that high-level Sudanese government officials were linked to a plot to bomb landmarks in the city of New York. Khartoum has denied the charges.

U.N. to help farmers in occupied lands

ROME (R) — The United Nations said Monday it would give development aid to poor farmers in the Israeli occupied territories. The Rome-based International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the U.N. agriculture agency, said in a statement it would concentrate on helping farmers in Jericho and the impoverished Gaza Strip, home to some 800,000 Palestinians. Earlier this month U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali set up a high-level U.N. task force to focus on economic and social development, particularly in the Gaza Strip.

Rushdie proclaimed greatest Booker Prize winner

LONDON (AFP) — British author Salman Rushdie, condemned to death by Iran's late spiritual leader Ayatollah Khomeini, was declared Monday the best novelist to have won the prestigious Booker Prize in the past 25 years. "I think this is the greatest compliment I have ever been paid as a writer," Mr. Rushdie said at the ceremony in London. In 1981 Mr. Rushdie received the Booker Prize, awarded by British literary critics, for his book *Midnight's Children*, which describes the story of a baby born in the hour after independence was declared in India. "I do not have to talk about the Satanic Verses tonight," said Mr. Rushdie, referring to the book condemned as blasphemous by Ayatollah Khomeini; and for which the Iranian leader imposed a death sentence on the author. Tehran said Saturday the religious decree pronounced by Ayatollah Khomeini was still in force.

Turks in Iraq for trade talks

BAGHDAD (R) — A group of Turkish businessmen has been visiting Baghdad to discuss ways of boosting trade with Iraq despite continuing U.N. sanctions. Baghdad newspapers and a Jordanian lawyer who organised the trip said on Monday. The visit, the first of its kind since the Gulf crisis that followed Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, has made headline news in Iraq. "We work and with persistence to find solutions and outlets to open Turkey's doors in front of the Iraqi people and break the embargo," the Defence Ministry newspaper Al Qadisiya quoted the leader of the delegation, Mustafa Satrioglu, as saying. The Iraqi press has given Mr. Satrioglu and his 10-member team a red-carpet reception. The government newspaper Al Jumhuriyah featured Mr. Satrioglu's picture and activities on its front page. "The visit itself is a defiance of U.N. sanctions," Mohammad Al Samman, the Jordanian lawyer, told Reuters. "These businessmen represent some of the largest Turkish companies and are to set up a trade centre in Iraq despite the sanctions." Turkey was Iraq's biggest trading partner before the Gulf war. Ankara benefited from transit fees on a pipeline carrying Iraqi oil through Turkey.

Turkey's rebel Kurds kill local journalist

ANKARA (R) — Separatist Kurds killed a local part-time journalist in Turkey's southeastern Bingol province on Monday, officials said. Muzaffer Akkus, a stringer for the Istanbul-based Milliyet newspaper, was gunned down in his car by guerrillas of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), who stopped the vehicle at a roadblock, the emergency rule governor's office said. One of his assailants died in a clash with troops who gave chase to the rebel group. Mr. Akkus, a händler by profession, may have angered the PKK for contracting to build a security post in Bingol for troops fighting the rebels, other local journalists said. In other Kurdish-related incidents in the region, a PKK militant was killed in a clash in Sirmak, the statement said. A schoolteacher was shot dead on a street in Diyarbakir city Monday and a motorcycle rider died in a volley of bullets on a village road in Batman Sunday.

Egypt, Pakistan sign cooperation accord

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Pakistan and Egypt signed here Monday an agreement on promoting bilateral cooperation in science and technology. An official statement said the two countries would explore possibilities for joint scientific projects, exchange technology and visits of scientists. The accord was signed by visiting Egyptian Minister of State for Scientific Research Abdul Hamid Ezz and Pakistani Minister for Science and Technology Mohammad Shafiq. The Egyptian minister is attending a meeting here of a special committee on science and technology of the 51-member Organisation of Islamic Conference based in Jeddah.

Nigeria sends more troops to Somalia

LAGOS (R) — Nigeria has sent more troops to join the U.N. peacekeeping operation in Somalia, where seven of its soldiers were killed in an ambush earlier this month. The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reported that 216 Nigerian soldiers left Kano airport for Somalia Saturday. It said an earlier batch of some 300 troops departed from the airport for Somalia on Sept. 13. Nigeria has pledged to continue its involvement in the U.N.-led multinational force in Somalia after seven of its soldiers were killed on Sept. 5 in an ambush in Mogadishu by guerrillas loyal to Somali warlord Mohammed Farah Aideed.

PLO more popular than Americans harbour doubts

WASHINGTON (R) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) is gaining public acceptance following its historic accord with Israel but most Americans still view the organisation with some suspicion, according to a new ABC News poll made public Monday. The network poll found that 24 per cent of Americans now hold a favourable view of the PLO, compared to just 12 per cent in April 1989. Sixty-one per cent support, and 42 per cent believe the Arab states want peace, compared to just 32 per cent in 1989. However, 53 per cent still hold an unfavourable view of the PLO, and 68 per cent oppose U.S. economic aid to Gaza and Jericho. By contrast, 54 per cent of Americans view Israel favourably, down from 60 per cent in 1989. But 58 per cent four years ago and just 38 per cent a decade ago. About two-thirds of Americans back Israel's decision to recognise the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people, while more than three-fourths support the PLO's decision to recognise Israel's right to exist, the poll found.

Rabin readies arms shopping list

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin will present Washington a shopping list of sophisticated military hardware when he visits in November, a newspaper revealed Tuesday. Mr. Rabin, who is also defence minister, will start drawing up the list in the coming days, the Haaretz said, following last week's signing of a Palestinian autonomy deal. He will not be looking for financial aid but advanced technology so far refused to Israel, fighter planes and weapons from U.S. Army depots, the daily said. It said Israel, which receives \$1.8 billion a year in U.S. military aid, preferred F-15A and F-16 fighters.

Sudan denies blocking relief supplies

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan has dismissed as baseless allegations by aid groups that the government was preventing planes from flying relief supplies to famine-stricken southern Sudan from Uganda. The commissioner general for relief and rehabilitation, Awad Khalifa, was quoted on Tuesday by Al Nasr newspaper as saying the reports were unfounded. Mr. Khalifa said relief flights to the south were continuing from within Sudan and abroad and the government was facilitating the delivery of aid to all areas in the region without discrimination.

PLO launches campaign to recruit policemen

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) launched a drive Tuesday to recruit thousands of young men and women to the new "national police force." An advertisement in the leading Palestinian newspaper, Al Quds announced that recruitment offices would open for a week from Thursday and called on "men and women who want to serve their country, their people and to help build a Palestinian state, join up." The offices will be in Jerusalem and the occupied West Bank towns of Kalkiya, Tulkarim, Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah, Jericho, Bethlehem and Hebron. The new force would "maintain security and order ... and sovereignty over the land, said the advert signed by a "supervisory committee."

Coptic teacher, policeman slain in Egypt

ASSIUT, Egypt (AFP) — Gunmen believed to be Muslim militants shot dead a Coptic Christian teacher and a policeman in separate attacks Tuesday in the southern Egyptian province of Assiut, police said. Teacher Edward Nakhua Iskandar, 50, was gunned down as he left home to go to school in the town of Dairut. As assistant director of a college from which several leaders of the underground Al Jamaa Al Islamiyah have emerged, he was charged with implementing Education Ministry directives to prevent infiltration by Muslim activities. In Shatrah, near the town of Assiut, two assailants shot dead policeman Ahmad Ali after forcing him off a minibus.

Demjanjuk to fly out of Israel today

TEL AVIV (AP) — John Demjanjuk plans to leave Israel on Wednesday after nearly two months of court-ordered delays while Holocaust survivors and Nazi hunters appealed for a new trial.

Prison services spokesman Dudi Ben-Ami said he had been informed that Mr. Demjanjuk and his family had ordered tickets for Wednesday. Another source who demanded anonymity confirmed tickets had been reserved for Wednesday.

Mr. Ben-Ami said Mr. Demjanjuk would be able to leave the Ayalon prison in central Israel once he showed he had airline tickets and permission from another country allowing him to enter.

Citing concern for his client's safety, Yoram Sheftel, Mr. Demjanjuk's attorney, refused to say when Mr. Demjanjuk was leaving or where he was headed.

"He feels excellent," said Mr. Sheftel. "He is preparing for his leaving, everything is packed. Otherwise, he is doing nothing."

Mr. Ben-Ami said he would not be aware of the destination until Mr. Sheftel showed prison authorities the tickets.

U.S. officials said Mr. Demjanjuk would be given a letter from the U.S. embassy that would permit him to return to the United States.

Mr. Demjanjuk's son, John Jr., and son-in-law, Ed Nishnie, and U.S. representative James A. Traficant Jr. left Cleveland Monday and were due to arrive in Israel on Tuesday to accompany Mr. Demjanjuk.

Mr. Ben-Ami said Mr. Sheftel asked that Mr. Demjanjuk's departure be kept secret in light of death threats from Jewish extremists, but the prison authority refused to cooperate. "Reporters will be there," he said.

Mr. Traficant said Monday he hoped his presence would deter extremists who have threatened to kill Mr. Demjanjuk.

"We know that there's been death threats out there against him, and I'm sure it's a web that includes all of us," Demjanjuk Jr. said.



John Demjanjuk

Mr. Demjanjuk said, "But we don't walk in fear. We have to do what we have to do."

The Israeli supreme court on Sunday put aside appeals for a new trial and lifted a restraining order holding up deportation of the 73-year-old former Ohio autoworker to leave.

The court in July overturned his conviction and death sentence on charges he was Ivan the Terrible, a Nazi guard who operated the gas chamber at the Treblinka camp in Poland during World War II. An estimated 850,000 people died at Treblinka in 1942-43.

Mr. Demjanjuk had been stripped of his U.S. citizenship in 1981 for lying about his Nazi past and was extradited to Israel in 1986 to be tried on the Treblinka charges.

In its July acquittal, the supreme court nonetheless said there was no doubt Mr. Demjanjuk had served as a guard at another Polish camp, Sobibor.

But Israel's attorney general Yosef Harish would not prosecute Mr. Demjanjuk on the Sobibor charges, saying it could violate the ban on double jeopardy, or trying him a second time on the same charges.

Mr. Demjanjuk's release was delayed five times while Nazi hunters and Holocaust survivors pleaded with the court to order a new trial based on evidence Mr. Demjanjuk was at Sobibor and other Nazi camps.

Britain allowed Iraq exports despite fears

LONDON (Agencies) — The British government permitted chemical exports to Iraq despite concerns they could end up in Iraqi nerve gas, the "Iraqgate" inquiry was told Monday.

The inquiry is trying to discover if the government broke its own rules and sold arms to Baghdad.

Former Junior Foreign Minister Tim Renton told the inquiry that he initially opposed the export of 36 tonnes of hydrogen fluoride to Iraq in 1986.

"I agreed to the recommendation that it should be approved subject to certain caveats," Mr. Renton told the inquiry. He insisted that Egypt should be told of Britain's concern about the chemicals not being reexported or put to military use.

Lord Justice Scott's inquiry was launched after the trial of three businessmen accused of illegally shipping arms to Baghdad collapsed in November, setting off a political storm.

Mr. Renton told the inquiry that he strictly applied guidelines on arms-related exports to Iraq and Iraq had never favoured either one in their eight-year war.

"I was always on the side of strictness from day one ... we applied the same criteria to both," he said.

Reviewing his time from 1985 to 1987 in the Foreign Office, Mr. Renton said: "I didn't leave (the job) with any worries. My conscience was clear. It didn't keep me awake at night."

On export guidelines to the combatants in the Iran-Iraq war, he said: "In the Foreign Office we were all very much of one mind on this ... I was never biased in favour of Iraq."

The guidelines stopped exports to the side which would "significantly enhance" the conflict.

Mr. Renton confessed the war was not always a major priority for him and was "relatively low on the Richter scale" of problems crossing his desk.

"It was a dreadful war with half a million dead already but it wasn't top of the pile every night," he said.

Mr. Renton, self-assured during his grilling, is the first of three foreign affairs ministers to appear this week before the tribunal. Witnesses are not under oath and have immunity from prosecution.

Mr. Renton's appearance coincided with Britain's decision to revoke all export licences for companies exporting goods to Iraq which are exempt from a United Nations trade embargo after it was discovered that some may have been doctored.

The U.N. Security Council imposed trade sanctions against Baghdad, limiting all but humanitarian aid, after Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

Sanctions renewed

The Security Council decided Monday to maintain the international embargo on Iraq, saying that Baghdad was not living up to U.N. demands.

The oil and trade embargo imposed after the 1990 invasion of Kuwait has since been linked to a U.N. requirement that Iraq comply with the U.N.'s demand that it destroy its chemical, biological and nuclear weapons industries as well as its long-range ballistic missile industry.

The embargo can be suspended only through a unanimous vote of the 15-member council.

China, backed by Brazil and Morocco, argued that Iraq had made progress towards meeting those demands during high-level weapons talks this month, diplomatic sources said.

That argument ran into opposition from the United States and Britain, which prevailed.

Part of the holdup is Iraq's reluctance to name its foreign military suppliers. The United Nations also is pressing Baghdad to approve activating surveillance cameras installed at two ballistic test sites in July.

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77311-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
12:00	La Chaine
19:00	News in French
19:15	Udhua
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	The Torch
21:10	Documentary
21:30	News in English
22:20	Ashteden
PRAYER TIMES	
05:02	Fajr
06:17	(Sunrise) Duha
12:29	Dhuhr
15:57	Asr
18:38	Maghreb
19:56	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweithel, Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Taranan Church Tel. 623666	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
623541, Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 625256	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 648199	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 623624, 659332	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
Weather will be fine with winds appearing at low altitudes over heights, and winds will be westerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman 16/29	
Aqaba 22/36	
Deserts 14/32	
Jordan Valley 20/36	

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 30, Aqaba 36. Humidity readings: Amman 21 per cent, Aqaba 26 per cent.	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Mohammad Al Nahawi	819213
Dr. Jamil Maraga	776149
Dr. Mubkhes Hashab	819220
Dr. Jassid Jassid	873351
Firas pharmacy	661912
Ferdous pharmacy	778336
Al Azuma pharmacy	637055
Al Salam pharmacy	637370
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shmiciam pharmacy	637660
Narouj pharmacy	623672
Najib pharmacy	847632
IRBID:	
Dr. Ali Al Omari	270332
Al Ouds pharmacy	(-)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Ziyad Jaiton	(-)
Khalifah pharmacy	985417
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	661227
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	658830
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	877636
Complaints	877647
Amman Municipality	787111
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Regain	661101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	773111
Jordan Television	774111
Radio Jordan	689100
Water Authority	815615
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power Company	636381
HOSPITALS	
RJ Flight Information 08-53200	
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn.	644281/6
Akshid Maternity, J. Amn.	642412/2
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Malles, J. Amman	636140
Al-Ahli, Abdali	664164/6
Shmiciam Hospital	664171/4
Shmiciam Hospital	669131
University Hospital	845845
Al-Mumbar Hospital	876227/9
Queen Alia Hospital	09980560
Al-Salam Hospital	09980562
Al-Haram Hospital	664171/4
Al-Basir, J. Ashrafiah	771101/3
Al-Basir, J. Ashrafiah	775111/26
Al-Basir, J. Ashrafiah	891611/15
Al-Basir, J. Ashrafiah	60224050
Al-Basir, J. Ashrafiah	641533
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (09) 85200-5, where it should always be verified.	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
09:30	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:00	Jeddah (RJ)
10:30	Larnaca (RJ)
10:50	Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
11:20	London (RJ)
11:30	Frankfurt (RJ)
11:40	Amsterdam (RJ)
12:00	Brussels, Paris (RJ)
12:30	Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
13:00	Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
13:30	Rome (RJ)
14:00	Riyadh (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
09:45	Beirut, Paris (AF)
09:50	Rome (AZ)
09:55	Beirut (OZ)
10:00	Dubai (EM)
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
10:30	Rome (RJ)
11:15	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:30	Berlin, London (RJ)
11:50	Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:00	Istanbul (RJ)
12:30	Colombo (RJ)
12:40	Sanaa (RJ)
13:00	Dhahran (RJ)
13:30	Riyadh (RJ)
14:00	Aden (RJ)
14:30	Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
15:00	Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
15:30	Riyadh (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
09:45	Beirut, Paris (AF)
09:50	Rome (AZ)
09:55	Beirut (OZ)
10:00	Dubai (EM)

09:45	Dubai (AZ)
09:45	Dubai (EM)
11:30	Jeddah (SA)
11:30	Sanaa (TY)
12:30	Cairo (MS)
13:30	Sharm El Sheikh (GF)
14:00	Abu Dhabi, Karachi (FI)
MARKET PRICES	
Upper/lower price in f/s per kg	
Apple	680/580
Banana	680
Banana (Mukammal)	620
Beans	720 / 620
Cabbage	14



His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday meets Omani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yousef Ben Alawi (Petra photo)

King, Omani official discuss building Arab solidarity

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday received at the Royal Court Omani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yousef Ben Alawi, who conveyed to him the greetings of Sultan Qaboos Ibn Said.

The King discussed with the Omani official current Arab issues and the latest development

in Middle East peace process.

The audience was attended on the Jordanian side by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali, Royal Court Chief Khalid Al Karaki, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Saeed Al Hassan. On the Omani side, attendees included Omani Ambassador to Jordan Mohammad Ben Sultan Al Bousaidi, the ambassador at the Omani Foreign Ministry, Ahmad Ben Yousef Al Harithi, and the counsellor,

Bader Ben Hamad Ben Hmoud.

Also Tuesday, Dr. Majali reviewed with him bilateral relations. The premier and Mr. Ben Alawi discussed the latest developments on the Arab and international levels, as well as issues of common interest.

The meeting was attended by Mr. Al Hassan and the Omani ambassador to Jordan. Later Tuesday Mr. Ben Alawi left Amman at the end of a two-day state visit.

University road tunnel nears completion

AMMAN (J.T.) — Amman Municipality Tuesday announced the completion of the first phase of a 30-metre long tunnel from the main entrance of the University of Jordan to the opposite side of the highway. The project is expected to be completed in a few weeks.

The first phase, which started on Sept. 1, entailed digging and building the internal walls and ceiling, according to the municipality.

The eight-metre-wide tunnel will be used by pedestrians, mainly university students. In recent years there have been numerous road accidents involving mostly student pedestrians crossing the congested highway.

The family of Mona Al Saleh, a university student who was killed in one such accident two months ago, contributed JD 3,000 to help finance the

tunnel, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

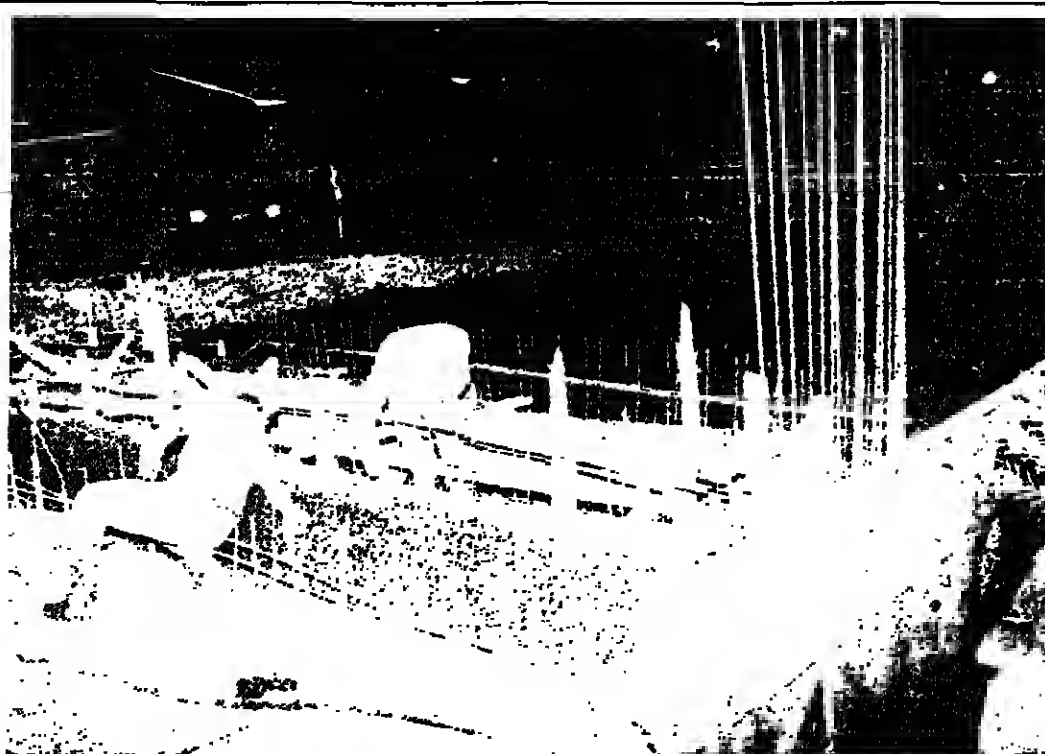
Asked why the tunnel was not built earlier, Amman Mayor Mamdouh Al Abbadi said that an incorrect estimation of the cost of the project discouraged former mayors.

He said the initial estimates were JD 5,000, but it took the municipality JD 48,000 to finish the initial phase of the project.

The second and final stage will be completed in three weeks and the total cost will be around JD 120,000, said Dr. Abbadi.

It took the municipality eight days to design the project and 10 days to drill the first stage and build the walls, according to Mohammad Kiswani, the project director.

Traffic was detoured along the Sweileh-Amman Road also known as the University Road during digging operations.



Workers lay cement above tunnel structure connecting main gate of University of Jordan with opposite side of the main highway (Photo by Yousef Al Allan)

Princess Sarvath opens JNRCS Russeifeh branch

ZARQA (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath Tuesday opened a branch of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) in Russeifeh. Addressing the opening ceremony, President of the JNRCS Mohammad Al Hadid said the opening of Russeifeh branch followed a visit made by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan

to the city in June.

The Russeifeh JNRCS branch president Mousa Al Sa'di, who is also the town's mayor, said the society's branch groups 300 members.

He noted that the branch was established on June 30. Princess Sarvath toured the various sections of the branch,

which includes a clinic and a pharmacy.

Attending the ceremony were senior government officials from Zarqa governorate.

The JNRCS was established in 1947, and is comprised of 1,215,000 members. It provides in-kind assistance to the poor, including food, clothing, medicine and shelter emergencies.



Basel Jardaneh

Jardaneh appointed RJ chair

AMMAN (J.T.) — Former Finance Minister Basel Jardaneh has been appointed by the Council of Ministers as Chairman of the Board of Directors of Royal Jordanian (RJ), the national airline, among other appointments of senior officials announced Tuesday.

Mr. Jardaneh succeeds Khalid Abu Hassan who resigned the post two years ago.

Former Commander of the Jordanian Royal Air Force Ihsan Shuroudh had served as RJ Acting Chairman until April, when he became advisor to His Majesty King Hussein.

The other appointments included Fayez Khasawneh who was made President of the Aqaba Regional Authority succeeding Bassam Kakish who became Minister of Water and Irrigation in the Cabinet of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali.

The cabinet also appointed Majed Qteishat as Secretary General of the Ministry of Youth. Mr. Qteishat had served as Assistant President of Mota University.

Mohammad Kreishan became director general of the Orphans Fund. He had served as a senior official at the Income Tax Department.

Dr. Umaina Dahan was appointed advisor at the prime minister's office for Women's Affairs.

Ministry continues issuance of work permits, but monitors compliance with guest worker rules

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Labour is continuing to issue work permits to guest workers, but permits will not be issued to two categories of non-Jordanians residing in the Kingdom, said Labour Minister Khaled Al Ghazawi Monday.

The first category includes non-Jordanian Arabs who entered the Kingdom as visitors and whose passports carry a stamp prohibiting them from working in Jordan, the minister explained.

The second category includes those who entered Jordan in trans-

it to another country, but stayed on, said Mr. Al Ghazawi.

He said the measures are intended to safeguard the interests of guest workers with valid work permits as well as Jordanian workers.

The minister announced that the ministry was intensifying its checks on institutions employing guest workers to ensure that they are abiding by laws and regulations.

Limited numbers of guest workers will continue to be granted work permits to ensure economic activity without en-

croaching upon the rights of Jordanian workers, said Mr. Ghazawi.

The labour ministry, he said, has been closely cooperating with the ministries of Interior and Health.

Referring to violations committed by employers, the minister said that major firms and industries are committing violations but farmers and small businesses are not.

He said, in August, the ministry issued 12,000 work permits, accounting for 24 per cent of the total permits issued this year.



Khaled Al Ghazawi

NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Malta, Mali

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday sent a cable to the President of Malta, congratulating him on his country's national day and wishing him continued good health and happiness and the people of Malta further progress and prosperity. Also Tuesday, the King sent a similar congratulatory cable to the President of Mali, congratulating him on his country's national day.

Prince Ali visits Environment Ministry

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Ali Ben Al Hussein Tuesday visited the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment where he met with Minister Mohammad Mahdi Al Farhan who briefed him on the

ministry's activities to preserve the environment and prevent pollution. Dr. Farhan reviewed plans to protect water and natural resources, prevent air pollution and control desertification, in addition to following up on international agreements on the preservation of the environment.

Aqaba TCC to cut phone service

AQABA (Petra) — The Telecommunication Corporation will partially disconnect the telephone service of defaulting subscribers here as of the end of this week, according to Aqaba Telecommunications Director Majed Al Mounani. The partial disconnection will last for one week and total service will be stopped if subscribers fail to settle their bills, by the end of the week, Mr. Mounani said.

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RSS releases study in Arabic on 'analytical perusal' of CIS

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Royal Scientific Society (RSS) Centre for International Studies has issued a study in Arabic by Ghali Odh entitled "Analytical Perusal of the Commonwealth of Independent States Agreement".

The book discusses the international affairs that prevailed in the wake of the radical changes that undermined the communist system in eastern Europe, elimin-

ated the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, and provided optimum conditions for the former Soviet Union member countries and the Warsaw Pact member states to achieve independence, undertake economic reforms and party pluralism, as well as adopted the free market economy, an RSS bulletin said recently.

The study discusses the events that preceded the collapse of the Soviet Union as well as the various political and military endeavours intended to maintain the Soviet Union or find a suitable style to associate these republics.

The new style took the internationally known form of the "Commonwealth of Independent States" (CIS).

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975

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Getting ahead on course with rhythm

IT IS good news His Majesty King Hussein's talks with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat have been successful in erasing all vestiges of all misunderstanding and hard feelings that the PLO-Israeli accord had left in its wake, leading to a Jordanian pledge to extend full support to the PLO in its bid to implement its deal with the Israeli side. This is no small feat since the fate of the Oslo Palestinian-Israeli agreement still hangs in the balance and is dependent to a great extent on Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation and coordination.

The extent of the Palestinian dependence on Jordan was illustrated by Mr. Arafat's comments to the press Monday when he said: "I am committed to confederation (with Jordan) because this is our political programme and I had been elected by our PNC according to this programme." Of course the subject of future Jordanian-Palestinian relations would have to be determined by the two peoples at the appropriate stage. Nevertheless the aim and purpose of the PLO chairman's visit to Amman appear to have been achieved by putting the Palestinian-Jordanian traditional and inter-dependent relations on track again.

It goes without saying that in the wake of the signature of the PLO-Israeli deal and the Jordanian-Israeli accord, the need for full cooperation and coordination between the two Arab parties has reached a new height. Foremost on the agenda of the two Arab sides is the restoration of mutual trust and confidence on which future relations can be constructed and cemented. The renewed Jordanian commitment to the PLO could not have come at a more opportune time given the complexity of the implementation stage of its interim agreement with Israel on the basis of the Jericho-Gaza first formula.

Even more critical is what lies ahead after the implementation of the first stage in the Israel-PLO pact. This is where joint work would assume even a higher sense of urgency. The success or the lack of it of the initial part of the Palestinian-Israeli deal would determine the fate of the peace process in the area. As there is no way that the first chapter in the peace agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis can see the light of the day without a thorough Jordanian involvement, the fate of the final chapters in the Arab-Israeli peace treaties cannot be attained without an early and effective Jordanian participation and cooperation.

This much the PLO leadership must have sensed and acknowledged. The rush for a rapprochement with Jordan on the heels of their much celebrated deal with the Rabin government explains the urgency of the PLO-Jordanian talks Monday and Tuesday. True to form, Jordan was more than ready to extend a brotherly hand to the Palestinian people with whom it shares commonality of interests and aspirations. This time around, there is no more room for making mistakes. The PLO, in particular, should remain on course this time with full Jordanian cooperation by keeping the Jordanian government abreast of its plans and programmes be they political, economic or otherwise.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

SAWT AL SHAAB daily said Tuesday that the meeting between King Hussein and Yasser Arafat was bound to open new avenues of closer cooperation and coordination between the PLO and Jordan, based on mutual respect and solid ground. King Hussein has reiterated Jordan's firm stand and backing of the PLO and the independent decision of its leaders which aim at ensuring freedom for the Palestinian people from occupation and the establishment of a Palestinian entity on Palestine soil, said the daily. The Jordanian and Palestinian peoples and their respective leaderships realise too well the intermingled interests, the demographic, geographic, social, economic and other ties binding them together and the common destiny they are bound to have, the paper pointed out. For this reason, the Arab masses in Jordan look forward towards further coordination between the Jordanian and PLO leaders and they expect even stronger bridges of cooperation in all fields and at all levels, added the daily. With the continued Jordanian backing of the Palestinians, the paper said, the PLO would be in a stronger position in its negotiations with the Israelis over the next stages. Mr. Arafat has expressed appreciation of Jordan's supportive stands for the Palestinians over the years and, said the paper, his talks with King Hussein have revealed the great importance he attaches to the PLO-Jordanian relationship, reflecting in this stand the feelings of the Palestinian people in the occupied lands.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily voiced his strong objection to any delay of the general elections scheduled for Nov. 8. Fahed Al Fanek expressed the view that any delay on the pretext that the 1967 refugees who live in the camps of Schneller, Souf, Baqaa and Huson would return in implementation of the PLO-Israeli deal could become a delay for years. The writer said that any delay in the elections would mean the absence of Parliament and a cancellation of a democracy in the Kingdom. Under the present crucial political circumstances, the elections assume more urgency than ever before because Parliament in Jordan is needed to decide on matters of destiny at a time when the country is facing serious issues which are bound to affect its social and economic stability, added the writer. He said any country which shuns democracy is bound to face a collapse of its political system.

Peace should be based on reconciliation not on compromises due to strategic imbalances

By Clovis Makoud

THE MUCH-heralded, dramatic scenes of reconciliation generated by the historic handshake between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin touched people throughout the world and brought to the forefront the latest power of human decency when a proper opportunity for self-expression is made available.

What happened on the White House lawn on Sept. 13, 1993, was a historic moment when visionaries and realists shared a compelling congeniality. The hurried quest to discover — perhaps uncover — a community of values, so visible during and after the signing ceremony, fostered an atmosphere of euphoria, preventing close scrutiny of the accord and allowing an understandable urge for dialogue to supersede the complexities of consequential negotiations.

In such a pervasive climate of optimism, proper objections are treated as opposition and opposition as an aversion to peace. What follows is an attitude that borders on intolerance or bought self-righteousness. In such circumstances, inquiries, and even facts, are perceived as attempts to spoil or as a veneer to mask an incipient plan to undermine. What renders discernment complex, or alternative assessments suspect, is a feeling that such undertakings, benign as they may be, tend to prevent the domino effect from taking place. Supporters of the agreement are hopeful that its momentum will justify their respective interpretations and expedite their expectations, as, indeed, Mr. Rabin's visit to Morocco indicated. Israel expects a speedy normalisation with Arab states, so that Syria and Lebanon experience a sense of isolation and the Palestinians comply with its agenda for the agreement's implementation. Mr. Rabin's outburst against Syrian President Hafez Assad the day after the ceremony was calculated to provoke a firm reaction, signalling to his own reluctant supporters and to the Israeli opposition that toughness continues to be his basic characteristic and "security" concerns

his uppermost priority. Attacking Syria, Mr. Rabin expects, will weaken the thrust of his internal opposition, especially insofar as so much of Likud's reaction seems irrational and reckless.

For Mr. Arafat's supporters, the momentum should be to establish facts on the ground and to act as if what is being planned for Gaza-Jericho, as well as for the West Bank, is building the nucleus of an independent state. Consequently, when civil society is restored and rebuilt, the substantive

treated as a first step.

While signing the accord was an inspiration to a substantial constituency of Palestinians, it was a frightening prospect for another significant component — namely the refugees in the camps of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and even within the occupied territories. For the refugees, the "historic" agreement was irrelevant, detrimental to their legal and human rights as well as their national rights. That the agreement postponed addressing their fate would have been

ment were anxious not to push Mr. Rabin too far the inference being that the disenfranchised Palestinians can be ignored if the stability of Israel's coalition Labour government is at stake.

The impressive momentum of the PLO-Israeli agreement should not preclude a clear perspective as to the loopholes which can render it vulnerable and even reversible. The goal is to strengthen, rather than undermine, the agreement, to transform it into a rallying force and avoid its potential for divisiveness. It is important to note that, aside from the challenge to the agreement from Hamas and rejectionist groups based in Damascus, several important and independent members of the PLO Executive Committee and consistent supporters of Mr. Arafat resigned in protest or registered strong and active dissent. And in spite of the disparate composition of the opposition to the agreement, coalescence into a united front cannot be ruled out. For this reason, a legitimising consensus should be ensured among Palestinians. Although unanimity is not imperative, the PLO leadership cannot pursue its present plans on the basis of a technical majority. On an issue of such gravity, involving the future of a people, nothing but a viable consensus will legitimise the PLO's decision.

Massive promotion of the agreement coupled with Mr. Arafat's unparalleled access to U.S. leaders created a prevailing impression that opposition is "old-fashioned," "unrealistic" and otherwise oblivious to the emerging global order and "the new regional balance of forces." Those who do not conform too readily to existing assumptions are "enemies of peace." A contrived polarisation ensued, propelling — unnecessarily, in my view — those who dissented or disagreed into confrontation.

The interconnections between Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians were deliberately de-emphasised to accommodate the limited "digestive" capacity of Mr. Rabin's government. Mr. Rabin's insistence that Syria

prevented the Lebanese army from curtailing Hizbollah's activities was a ludicrous attempt to trap Lebanon back into civil strife and thus enfeeble the creative possibilities in the limited self-governing authority in Gaza and Jericho and, subsequently, in the West Bank. A recurrence of civil strife in Lebanon, Mr. Rabin hopes, would enable Israel to convince the U.S. and the world community that the Gaza-Jericho option was a "concession" on its part, rather than a minor and flimsy

with Israel, as exemplified by the Camp David accords, is the key to Israel's security and U.S. tutelage of prospects for regional development and stability. If this impression gains currency and peace becomes a humbling, rather than ennobling, experience for the Arabs, then the impact of whatever goodwill was generated on the White House lawn will rapidly dissipate.

Pointing to the loopholes in the agreement might ensure its progressive evolution. On the other hand, failure to recog-

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aspects of developmental governance will constitute the underpinnings of an irreversible move towards exercising the sovereign prerogatives of an independent state, the anticipated outcome that Mr. Arafat hopes to achieve.

The response of the world community, the projected relief of Palestinians to being outside the forcefield of Israeli power, in addition to the commitment shown by a resilient business and professional Palestinian middle class to invest, to reconstruct and to prove their mettle, all contribute to justifying the ebullience and hope that recognition of the PLO and the ensuing agreement engendered. In a way, many Palestinians decided that if this were the only available option, it would be

tolerable if an outcome had been envisaged. The absence of any reference to a possible solution to their rights reinforcing their sense of dispossession and disenfranchisement, further igniting anxieties and fears about their destiny and tension with the population of the host countries. In Lebanon in particular this issue becomes more acute as social peace remains fragile and political balance precarious.

The fact that major issues such as the ultimate status of refugees, Jerusalem and Israeli settlements were shelved summarily for two years or more without even the outlines of a possible outcome underlines a perplexing insensitivity to the overall Palestinian situation. The prevailing view is that those who brokered the agree-

"The impressive momentum of the PLO-Israeli agreement should not preclude a clear perspective as to the loopholes which can render it vulnerable and even reversible. The goal is to strengthen, rather than undermine, the agreement, to transform it into a rallying force and avoid its potential for divisiveness. ... Although unanimity is not imperative, the PLO leadership cannot pursue its present plans on the basis of a technical majority. On an issue of such gravity, involving the future of a people, nothing but a viable consensus will legitimise the PLO's decision."

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To add insult to injury, the U.S. has undertaken a vigorous campaign to assure Israel's security and to end the Arab economic boycott. Nudging its friends in the Arab World to normalise relations before Israel withdraws from the occupied territories is exacting too heavy a price for recognition granted to the PLO. Whatever the incentives might be to support the PLO-Israeli agreement, they should not be perceived as debilitating the sense of community among the Arabs and reinforcing Israel's hegemony in the region.

There is an emerging feeling that breaking down the Arab World into dealing separately

and address these loopholes could be a prescription for its unraveling. The agreement has been accepted in a lukewarm fashion by some Palestinians and opposed vigorously by others. Reinforcing the U.N. is giving direction to this endeavour could provide the catalyst to tie the loose ends and give shape to a comprehensive peace based on reconciliation among equals cognisant of their respective humanity, rather than clever compromises achieved due to an unforgiving strategic imbalance in the region.

The writer is former Arab League representative to the U.N. This article appeared in the Sept. 20, 1993, issue of the Christian Science Monitor.

Israel's designs on Lebanese water

By Hussein A. Amery

Israel's fierce, week-long land, sea and air assault on more than 90 villages, towns and cities throughout Lebanon at the end of July had the pronounced objective of ejecting Hizbollah fighters from southern Lebanon. The target of Israel's strategy was not only guerrilla positions but also civilian population centres, especially those located immediately north of the "security zone" to create mass emigration and thus put pressure on the Lebanese government to curb the activities of the Islamic militia. However, this attack may have had further hydrological objectives, which would be served by widening the "security zone", created inside South Lebanon after the Israeli invasion of 1978, code-named "Operation Litani".

The "security zone" is normally patrolled and run by about 1,000-2,000 Israeli soldiers and by the South Lebanese Army (SLA). Although trained, equipped and paid for by Israel, the SLA, which is headed by Antoine Lahad, is made up of approximately 2,300 Lebanese; it controls this territory of 900 square kilometres which contains 85 villages with a total population of approximately 180,000. Half of this population are Shiites, 30 per cent Christians, 10 per cent Druze and 10 per cent Sunnis.

The magnitude of Israel's retaliation puzzled many. However, the hydro-strategic significance of southern Lebanon is rarely mentioned as a factor behind Israel's continued occupation of the "security zone". Israel is rapidly approaching a water crisis. Not only has it been utilising virtually all of its annual renewable water stock of 1,900 million cubic metres (mcm), it has in fact been consuming 17 per cent more water than is naturally available to it. The deficit in water supply is being met by desalinating brackish salty waters, recycling waste water and over-pumping underground waters. The gap between water supply and demand has been widening, which is why Israel has decided to build more desalination plants and is contemplating importing fresh water by sea from Turkey or Europe. But given the high cost of water imports and the potential for disruption of supplies, Israel is also believed to be seeking water from a closer source, namely the Litani

River. After its occupation of the "security zone" up to the western bend of the Litani, Israel's historical interest in that river gained new prominence, thus feeding Lebanon's growing concern over Israel's hydrological imperatives and ambitions.

In 1919, Chaim Weizmann, then head of the World Zionist Organisation, wrote to Britain's prime minister arguing that Lebanon was a "well watered" region, thus the Litani river's waters were "valuable to the territory north of the proposed (they became today's) frontiers. They can be used beneficially in the country much further south." Weizmann concluded that his organisation considered "the Beqaa Valley of the Litani, for a distance of 25 miles above the bend" of the river, essential to the future of the "Jewish National Home." After the creation of Israel, Moshe Sharet, later prime minister, reported in his diaries that David Ben-Gurion (the first prime minister) and Moshe Dayan (the chief-of-staff) were strong advocates of an Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon up to the Litani. Sharet quotes Dayan as having said in 1954 that the Israeli army would "enter Lebanon, occupy the relevant territory" then the "territory south of the Litani will be annexed to Israel and everything will fall into place."

Diverting Litani water

Shortly after the establishment of the "security zone", the Israeli army prohibited the sinking of new wells there. Moreover, after the invasion of 1982, Israeli army engineers seized all the hydro-graphic charts and technical documents about the Litani and its hydro-electric installations, and carried out seismic soundings and surveys near the Litani's western bend, most likely to determine the optimum place for a diversion tunnel. Israel also controlled most or all of the waters from the Hasbani and Wazzani rivers (tributaries of the Jordan) which arise in Lebanon, and over the years there have been reports of water siphoning from the Litani into the Jordan River basin.

The U.S. Department of the Army's third edition (1989) of "Lebanon: a country study" asserts:

"In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Lebanese officials reported that small tributaries of the Hasbani River were being diverted to Israel near the northern town of Metulla. Independent water analysts stated that after the 1982 invasion, Israel engaged in a much more serious diversion of Lebanese waters by attaching stopcocks at a pumping station on the Litani River. The stopcocks were designed to switch at least part of the flow, which is generated entirely within Lebanon — to Israel via a specially constructed pipeline."

This Israeli-occupied zone straddles the western bend of the Litani River. From that bend, the Litani is less than 12 kilometres away from the Hasbani River. The Jordan River, which empties into Lake Tiberias, supplies over 35 per cent of Israel's water needs. The Litani's proximity to the Jordan makes it easily divertible into Israel. Israel's permanent occupation or continued access to the Litani could augment its annual water supply by up to 600 mcm if it reoccupied the Karoun Dam it held between 1982 and 1985, and if one takes into account the underground waters of the south. Another attraction of the Litani River is the high quality of its water compared with more saline water in Lake Tiberias.

Lebanon's water needs

All this assumes that Lebanon has a water surplus. Its renewable water potential is 5,100 mcm a year, its current annual water consumption 1,200 mcm. However, projections for the year 2030 show that its water needs would be 3,140 mcm a year, while others estimate twice that. Much of this would be for agriculture. Lebanon has 275,000 hectares of irrigated farmland and less than 70,000 of irrigated lands, a small area compared to the ministry of irrigation's long-term estimated need for 350,000.

The Lebanese government began planning to utilise the waters of the Litani 40 years ago. It established the Litani Project in the early 1950s and planned to irrigate 20,000 hectares in the south and 120,000 in the Beqaa plain. Electricity for much of Lebanon is provided by six hydroelectric stations. While the

northern portion (located in Western Beqaa district) of the Litani Project is more or less complete, the government has yet to implement the southern part of the project. Bureaucratic wrangling, technical considerations and, most important, 15 years of civil war have delayed the project by decades.

Harnessing South Lebanon's underground water sources and those of the Litani are essential for the development of the south. Development of the agricultural sector, in which the south has a comparative advantage, and investments in related schemes may mitigate the southern population's feelings of alienation and strengthen their sense of national allegiance.

However, a different plan appears on the horizon for South Lebanon. Israeli Prime Minister Rabin may heed the advice of former Defence Minister Ariel Sharon who, since 1985, has been calling for a Lebanese "security zone" that stretches to the Awali River. In a Jerusalem Post article, Mr. Sharon called for dividing the zone into a southern and northern sector. In the former, which resembles the current "security zone", the Israeli army and its proxies would have a physical presence. In the latter sector, between the Litani and Awali rivers, and for an area that extends between 35 and 40 kilometres north of the international border, Israel would declare "its freedom of action". This was recently repeated in the Lebanese daily Al Hayat, which reported that Israel planned to widen the "security zone" without physically expanding its presence or that of the SLA into it. This, according to the newspaper, was being established by depopulating and flattening 30 of those villages that border the zone, and thus preventing resistance forces from being reestablished there.

Post-war Lebanon, with its desire for domestic stability, reconstruction and national reconciliation, is being forced to reorder its priorities and face some tough decisions. Diverting part of the Litani would stunt the economic development of the south and the Beqaa, frustrate the post-war national-building process and strengthen the hands of anti-government forces. There are 1,801 villages and towns in Lebanon, of

which 254 villages are not supplied with water (77 settlements were abandoned or destroyed prior to the recent assault).

Statistics for 1984 reveal that 25 per cent of Lebanon's population did not have adequate access to sanitary facilities, 82 per cent in rural areas such as the south and the Beqaa. Therefore, one could expect that once peace and stability were restored to southern Lebanon and other areas, economic development and infrastructural improvements would flow, and water consumption would rise. Denying the long-neglected and impoverished

population of South Lebanon access to water for their homes, farms and industries would aggravate their frustrations with the central government and with their allegiance to it even further. Widening the "security zone" or diverting some Litani water prior to substantially improving the standard of living and living conditions for the southern Lebanese would severely challenge the internal stability of the country.

Dr. H.A. Amery is assistant professor in the Department of Geography, Bishop's University, Quebec. This article is reprinted from Middle East International.

LETTERS

May beauty prevail

To the Editor:

Recently I returned to my home in the U.S. after visiting my family, Mr. and Mrs. Elias Mukhar and my grandchildren, in Amman. It was a most enjoyable visit and my eighth trip to Jordan since 1973.

This time, especially, I saw so much growth and improvement. So many large buildings and new homes being constructed; it was easy to see the economic growth taking place.

To see democracy beginning to work through public elections, registration of voters and women running for office shows progress towards a growing future. This inspires the youth of our countries to help improve living conditions, educate and make a nation grow.

Although the impatience of the Jordanian drivers is still very evident, there also are some signs of improvement: stopping and allowing pedestrians to pass in front of them, less horn honking. While in Jordan, I read your newspaper daily and found it most interesting and news worthy on all subjects.

I would like to make one suggestion, though, to the committee being formed to help eliminate the beggars and the homeless. Jordan has a beautiful desert countryside and many historical places. But the highways and roads are littered, by papers, cans and thousands of plastic bags.

If centres were set up for the collection of this litter and so much per bag were paid, it could be a legitimate "job" for many with nothing to do. It would be "beautifying Jordan."

The road to Kanizman is a good example to see. This is a large tourist attraction and such places should be kept clean not unsightly and littered with trash.

The United States has had a programme to "Keep America Beautiful" for many years and large fines are charged to anyone caught littering. Litter bags are in nearly all cars. It is a large, educational programme and it certainly helps the environment.

I have many wonderful friends in Amman and plan to return next year. In my small way I try to be an "ambassador" for Jordan and educate "foreigners" from here about a country they know very little about.

I sincerely hope the people of this fine country of Jordan will continue to grow and prosper.

Mrs. Leslie R. Barwick,
Salt Lake City,
Utah,
U.S.A.

Environmental think-tank urges dietary changes to prevent mass starvation

THE WORLDWATCH Institute believes westerners should change their eating habits but has an unusual way of expressing it. According to Lester Brown, its president, we need to "move down the food chain." By this he means we should eat less meat. Neither he nor Worldwatch have espoused vegetarianism, however. They are worried about mass starvation.

The Washington-based institute, one of the world's most influential environmental think-tanks, have published *Vital Signs 1993*, an attempt to measure the

health of the planet. The more than 30 "vital signs" — ranging from energy efficiency and atmospheric temperature to windpower capacity and bicycle sales — aim to do for the global environment what indices of trade, production and GDP do for its economy. But the analogy can be carried much further. According to Worldwatch, the spillover effects of environmental degradation are now seriously undermining economic performance: we have reached some sort of turning point.

Consider the following. Air pollution of Europe's forests costs an estimated \$3.4 bn a year

in lost wood and jobs, increased flooding, soil losses and the silting of rivers. Degradation of drylands — four-tenths of the earth's land area — costs \$42bn a year, roughly the value of the U.S. grain harvest, in lost crops and livestock. Pollution in the former Soviet Union has led to a decline in life expectancy and higher health costs.

The cost of global warming to the U.S., meanwhile, has been put at one per cent of GNP. Water scarcity, says Vital Signs — the world has one-third less water per person than in 1970 — is limiting economic expansion and threatening conflict in re-

The first lesson of such figures is that environmentalism can no longer be considered a western middle-class whim: the world's economic prospects rest on the health of its environment. Conventional economic wisdom attributes the recession of the early 1990s to mismanagement in the industrial countries. Not so, says Worldwatch. Nature's constraints are now "directly affecting global economic trends." And nowhere is this truer than in food production.

According to Vital Signs, the world is entering an era of protein

scarcity. In the 1980s it finally reached those global limits of which the 1970s warned (and at which night-wingers scoffed). First, the world's fish catch has increased by 735 million hectares in 1981, is now static at around 91 million hectares. Second, the global fish catch is also static, at just under 100 million tonnes — roughly the figure scientists believe is the maximum sustainable yield of the oceans. And third, there are 91 million new mouths to feed every year.

Since 1984, in consequence, grain production per person has, for the first time, been falling. Can't new land be brought into production? Probably not — on topsoil losses and urbanisation make such prospective gains largely illusory, says Worldwatch.

What about higher yields from the existing acre? Much of the scope for increased productivity from fertilisers has been exhausted since 1988, world fertiliser use has declined.

Add global warming to such equations and you arrive at Lester Brown's nightmare scenario. Traditionally the United States has been the world's grain banker but in 1988 the American harvest failed massively and the U.S. had to dip into its reserves to maintain its exports — normally about one-third of production. Suppose we have another year or two of heat and drought like 1988 — a likely prospect with the warming planet — and the U.S. harvest fails again, exhausting its reserves? Where does Japan, the world's largest importer, go for

its grain? Will a strong yen outweigh a weak dollar for home-grown U.S. wheat? Will the American administration slap on controls, precipitating a trade war?

Mr. Brown believes that the six percent decline in grain output per person between 1984 and 1992 is the "most disturbing economic trend in the world today." The West may think its purchasing power may cocoon it from world hunger but it is a calculated risk: a starving world is an unstable world. Possible scenarios include debt defaults, mass movements of refugees or the spread of trigger-happy anti-western regimes.

Global stability, in short, may rest on some subtle dietary trade-offs. With production of protein—fish, meat and soya beans—

slowing or static, but population growing by 41 million annually. We need to eat less differently.

At its most simple, do we eat grain to feed it to cattle?

Make the exhortation to eat less meat. A cow is a relatively inefficient means of producing protein; far better to turn the land over to soy beans. In land-use terms, a non-meat diet is between two and three times more efficient: it would thus effectively "create" large additional areas of cropland. Many people who have cut out meat from their diet — an estimated seven per cent of Britons — have probably done so for reasons of animal welfare. But there is a much greater altruism involved — the prevention of mass starvation — The Independent.

By Peter Humphrey
Reuter

SNAGOV MONASTERY. Romania — There's no corpse to be taken through its heart in Dracula's tomb and his grave isn't quite where it was said to be, either.

The corpse of the mediaeval Romanian despot, whose passion for impaling his enemies inspired Irish author Bram Stoker to write the fictional Dracula horror story 100 years ago, is buried in a red-brick Byzantine church.

The church is all that remains of a 14th century monastery on a small island in the middle of Lake Snagov, 40 km north of Bucharest.

To get there, you yell from the shore and a peasant woman rows a boat from the remote island to fetch you.

Here lies Vlad Tepes Dracula, Vlad the Impaler of the Order of the Dragon, who lived from 1431 to 1476, and thrice ruled the old Romanian Principality of Wallachia, defending it against invading Ottoman Turks and other predatory neighbours.

His simple tomb is marked with a vase of chrysanthemums and a portrait of the prince. Devoted brown eyes gaze out from a mean countenance, outstanding for its long, dark, straggly hair, beak-like nose, rubbery lips and jewelled headgear.

"Vlad's tomb is not where it is

marked, but under a pillar on the left hand side of the church," said Father Emilian, an Orthodox priest who is the monastery's resident monk and keeper.

Excavations in 1936 uncovered the tomb with two skeletons, apparently Vlad and his wife Elena, with princely signet rings of their era on their fingers, Mr. Emilian said.

"It seems that the plaque marking the tomb had deliberately been moved to another place, in case the invading Turks should desecrate it," Mr. Emilian told Reuters.

Even if the historical Dracula disappoints those who imagine him as the bloodsucking vampire of Stoker's dark fable, there is still a mystery surrounding his burial ground to fire their imagination.

The island is shrouded in mist for much of the year. Frogs and insects chirp from the reedbeds, bats flit eerily around the church and a ruined tower, about 100 long-eared owls roost in the pine trees.

In winter and spring the owls sit on the pine boughs with rolling, heavy eyes staring down spookily, or they glide silently from tree to tree like phantoms.

Among the villagers who live on the lake's shore, legends abound of mysterious happen-

ings. Some speak of Dracula [ailing] and torturing his political foes and killing them by impaling them.

The ruined foundations of a prison can still be seen. Decapitated skeletons have been found here during various excavations.

According to peasant stories, after Dracula's campaigns against the landed gentry, or boyars, the monastery was taken over by some of the boyars and they hid their treasure here.

The monks threw some of the treasure in the lake so the Turks would not raid it, and there it supposedly remains.

Local people also say that whenever the waters of the lake become stormy, strange noises emerge from its depths.

They still tell stories of centuries of murders and assassinations of boyars or abbots at the monastery.

An entire chain gang is also said to have drowned in the murky depths when a fragile bridge, long gone, collapsed.

The first monastery was built in the early 14th century and Vlad the Impaler continued the work, enlarging it and adding a jail. He is said to have built a secret tunnel connecting it to the shore several hundred meters away.

Romanian historians and theologians deny the confusion which the Stoker fiction has wrought upon the history of Vlad, one of Romania's historical national heroes.

Vlad Tepes was a Christian

ruler, an advocate of justice and order. It is true his methods were rough but that does not make him a vampire." Orthodox Bishop Roman told Reuters during a visit to the monastery.

Vlad was notorious for impaling Turkish soldiers on poles along the roadside as a warning to other invaders.

He had the turbans of several Turkish envoys nailed to their skulls when they refused to "doff their hats" at court.

"He placed himself in the forefront of the fight against the Ottoman Empire. The spike was a common instrument of torture at that time and he only used it more than others."

The monastery reached its peak of splendour in the 17th century, when one of Wallachia's first printing shops was opened here. In recent decades it has fallen into disrepair, damaged by earthquakes and neglected during communist rule which ended in 1989.

A summer palace of executed dictator Nicolae Ceausescu is visible across the lake. His flamboyant playboy son Nicu used to visit the island, the clerics said.

It is also a favourite spot of President Prime Minister Nicolae Vacaroiu, who rows here at weekends from his villa.

Monks are restoring the church building and frescos this year with government and Orthodox Church money, with a view to attracting more pilgrims and tourists.

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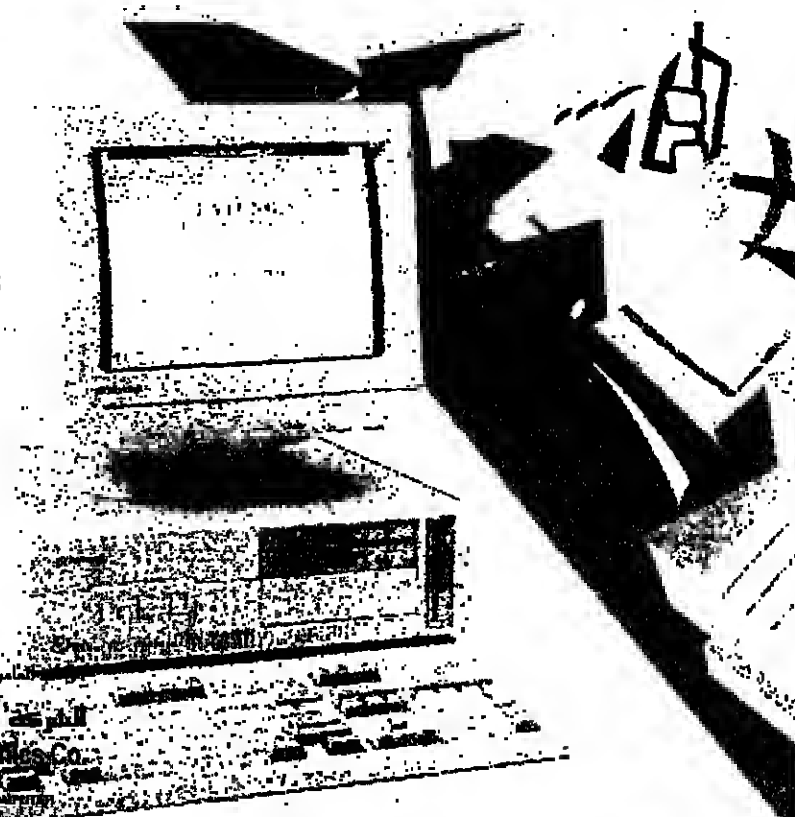
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Airliner shot down in Abkhazia; fighting continues near Sukhumi

LIS, Georgia (Agencies) — An airliner crashed, possibly after being shot down, while trying to land Tuesday at the besieged city of Sukhumi while fighting continued between separatists and government troops.

The Russian government said 27 people reportedly were on board the flight from Sochi, in southern Russia.

Georgian officials said the plane was shot down while trying to land, but Russian officials could not confirm that. There was no word on casualties.

The crash occurred as Georgian troops battled separatist fighters just outside the government-held capital of Abkhazia, where Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze remained encamped.

"There can be no talk about any kind of withdrawal from Sukhumi," Mr. Shevardnadze said on Georgian state television from Sukhumi.

An Associated Press photo stringer was among those wounded in Abkhazia, a Black Sea region that declared sovereignty a year ago from the Georgian government. More than 100 people were killed and more than 800 wounded Monday, said Zhiuli Shatava, Georgia's prime minister for Abkhazia.

The weeklong fighting shattered a truce called in July after battles killed more than 3,000 people and left most of Abkhazia in separatist hands.

The fall of Sukhumi would be a major blow to Mr. Shevardnadze's government, which has been beset by ethnic conflicts, political rebellions and economic

turmoil since breaking from the Soviet Union in 1991. It has been fighting two separate wars with different ethnic groups and a civil war launched by supporters of former President Zviad Gamsakhurdia.

Sukhumi's fall could lead to the loss of Abkhazia, which in turn could encourage other ethnic separatist movements in Georgia and southern Russia. Both Russia and the United States have urged a quick end to the fighting.

"The fall of Sukhumi means the breakup of Georgia," Mr. Shevardnadze said Tuesday in the television interview.

Mr. Shevardnadze warned of "a real danger of slaughter" if Sukhumi fell and said "there has been panic in the city because the danger is serious."

Mr. Shevardnadze, 65, has vowed to remain in Sukhumi, issuing orders and appealing for outside help from the bomb-damaged parliament building in the centre of the seaside town.

Abkhaz separatists claimed Tuesday to have captured Sukhumi's TV tower less than a kilometre from the regional government headquarters inside the city, Russia's Interfax News Agency reported.

Government forces reportedly pushed Abkhazians out of Sukhumi after intense fighting Monday that included house-to-house combat.

Georgian warplanes were attacking Abkhazian forces north of Sukhumi along the Gumista River, Russia's ITAR-TASS News Agency quoted the Abkhazian government as saying.

AP stringer Andrei Solov

was struck by debris in the right side of his head when the building in which he was standing outside Sukhumi was hit by a shell apparently fired from a Georgian cannon.

Mr. Solov, who was with Abkhazian fighters at the time, was reported in good condition Tuesday after surgery in the Russian town of Sochi about 100 kilometres north of the region.

Georgian leaders have accused Russians of fuelling a surprise attack by separatist rebels in Abkhazia.

Georgian Defence Minister Gia Karkarashvili, in a television interview from the besieged Abkhazian capital Sukhumi late Monday, cited the scale of the rebel artillery bombardment.

"It is not possible for such a quantity of shells to be in the hands of the rebels," he said.

"Now it is clear with whom we are at war."

Russia has consistently denied being partial to one side or the other and is trying to mediate a peace settlement.

Mr. Shevardnadze also alleged Russian support for the rebels.

"Our weapons are old and broken, but the Abkhaz have modern arms. The 'third force' has undermined the Sochi agreement," he told a television interview.

"Eighty to 90 per cent of the mercenaries fighting for the rebels are Russian citizens," Mr. Shevardnadze added.

Russia has repeatedly denied Georgian allegations that some of its officers quartered at former Soviet bases in Abkhazia have armed and advised and even

fought alongside the rebels.

Parliament's press service said efforts to break the siege of Sukhumi suffered a setback Tuesday when nationalist militia refused to fight until Georgian forces had released two of their men.

A spokesman said supporters of Mr. Gamsakhurdia wanted the government to free two men arrested last year for a bomb attack on Jaba Ioseliani, who heads a rival militia force.

Teimuraz Stepanov, head of Mr. Shevardnadze's administration, said the pro-Gamsakhurdia forces — known as "zviadists" — of Commander Lotti Kobaliya had reached Abkhazia's second town, Ochamchira.

But they were refusing to travel the 60 kilometres to Sukhumi until their comrades were released.

"Negotiations are going on," Mr. Stepanov said.

Meanwhile, Russian officers were kidnapping in the Georgian capital Tbilisi by an armed gang early Tuesday, ITAR-TASS reported.

The two men, Second Lieutenant Vladimir Rogal and Squadron leader Oleg Beskaraevy, were doing their military service with Russia's Border Guards and were stationed in Tbilisi.

The Russian headquarters in Tbilisi received no immediate claims for the incident.

U.S. President Bill Clinton sent a telegram expressing strong support for Mr. Shevardnadze and efforts to end fighting with Abkhazian separatist forces, the White House said Monday.

Bosnian Muslims to get sea access

SARAJEVO (R) — Muslims said Tuesday that the crucial issue of their access to the sea was agreed in talks between the warring factions on the proposed division of Bosnia.

International negotiator Lord Owen said Muslims, Croats and Serbs may be closer than ever to peace following Monday's talks aboard the British air aircraft carrier Invincible.

Bosnia's Muslim president, Alija Izetbegovic, plans to put a peace deal to his parliament next Monday, keeping hopes of a settlement alive despite the cancellation of a meeting in Sarajevo that was hoped might end the Bosnian war.

Montenegro's President Momir Bulatovic, who also took part in the Invincible talks, said the Muslims were not yet ready to accept

the proposed peace package but added it was realistic to expect that they would do so in the next two weeks.

There was no immediate word from the key Serb and Croat participants in the talks on progress towards a settlement.

Despite the optimistic talk, peace seemed remote on the ground in Bosnia.

Muslim troops were advancing on the Croat-held central Bosnian town of Vitez in an attempt to cut a vital supply road, a United Nations spokesman said Tuesday.

Attacking Muslim-led government troops seized ground south of Vitez but had been held off to the north, according to Lieutenant-Colonel Bill Aikman of the U.N. Protection Force.

At Mostar, another flashpoint

in the 17-month civil war, surrounding Croat forces shelled the eastern part of the town while Muslim forces 15 kilometres to the north were advancing to break the Croat siege.

In Zagreb, Bosnian Foreign Minister Haris Silajdzic said the key issue of Muslim access to the Adriatic Sea had been agreed in the ship-board talks between Muslim, Croat and Serb leaders.

"Access to the Sea and other questions, especially (Muslim) access to the sea, were agreed yesterday," he told Reuters television.

International peace negotiators Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg organised the Invincible talks to seek agreement on a proposed three-way division of landlocked Bosnia into Croat, Serb and Muslim mini-states.

Actress Michelle Phillips robbed at gunpoint

WEST HOLLYWOOD, Calif. (AP) — Actress Michelle Phillips was robbed at gunpoint while sitting in a parked car with a friend, authorities said. Miss Phillips, 49, gave up her purse to the bandits, and neither she nor her friend were hurt during the Sunday night robbery, Sheriff's Deputy Gabe Ramirez said. The actress, who starred in the television evening soap opera Knots Landing, was also a member of the popular 1960s singing group the Mamas and the Papas, known for hits such as California Dreamin' and Monday, Monday. Her daughter, Chynna, is in the pop group Wilson Phillips. Two gunmen approached the actress and Aloma Ichinose, 50, as they sat in a car in the parking lot of a restaurant about 10:45 p.m. the two had intended to eat there, but it was closed, Mr. Ramirez said. One of the men placed the barrel of a handgun against Ms. Ichinose's head and demanded money, Mr. Ramirez said. Miss Phillips surrendered her purse and the men ran away, he said. Miss Phillips lost an unidentified amount of cash, credit cards and identification, Mr. Ramirez said.

Missing boy found in 'talking train'

LAFAYETTE, Ind. (AP) — A nine-year-old boy missing over the weekend was found unhurt Monday in a railroad grain car after a toddler told his grandmother the train was "Thomas the tank engine" and talking to him. Steven T. Mason, a fourth-grader, had climbed into the top of a grain car Friday while playing near his home in Indianapolis. Police suspected Steven had hopped a freight train because his friends had apparently done it before. That led to searches as far away as Little Rock, Ark., of trains that had passed through Steven's neighbourhood Friday. But it wasn't until two-year-old Joey Vandergraff convinced his grandmother that "Thomas the tank engine" was talking to him that Steven was found in Lafayette, 60 miles (100 kilometres) northwest of Indianapolis. Joey, playing in his grandmother's back yard Monday morning, heard Steven's cries for help and thought it was the character from the Shining Time Station children's television series. "He said, 'Grandma, Thomas is talking to me,'" said Linda Yost, "I thought, 'You little buster, but he had this look on his face.' The two went out to the back fence where Mrs. Yost could hear a faint "Help. Get me out." She ran into the house and called the police emergency number.

Newlyweds spend 2 weeks in store window

PRAGUE, Czech Republic (AP) — Newlyweds Josef and Marketa chose an unusual honeymoon — two weeks in the display window of a downtown Prague department store. Josef and Marketa Melan, both 20, lived in a furniture window display at Kotva, Prague's largest department store. "Some people were treating us as animals," the Saturday issue of the Lidova Demokracie daily quoted Josef as saying. "They would knock on the window and wait for our reaction." The couple equipped with a sitting area, bed and kitchenette, were displayed to the public every day from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. with a five-minute break every four hours. Meals were provided by the store, and they whiled away the hours reading or listening to radio. At night, they were afforded some privacy when the window was draped with curtains. Friday morning, when their two-week stint ended, came the reward. They took home the display furniture worth 200,000 crowns (\$6,896), a fortune for the average wage earner who makes about 7,000 crowns (\$240) a month.

German landlords prefer dogs to small children

SAARBRUECKEN, Germany (AP) — German landlords prefer to rent to people with dogs than families with small children, a tenants representative said on radio. Large families were finding it increasingly difficult to find accommodation, Helmut Schlich, director of the German Tenants Association said during an interview on International Children's Day with local radio in western Germany. He said there were a large number of homeless families and estimated that up to three million extra homes were needed in Germany. "We must do everything to prevent families with children from being homeless," he added. Meanwhile, a charity organisation, the AWO, estimated that at least a million children under the age of 18 lived in poverty in Germany. AWO said in a statement that government cuts particularly in the social sector "had not only increased poverty, but had also led to an increase in the number of children hit by poverty."

ANC, PAC fail to agree on peacekeepers

HARARE (R) — Two leading South African black opposition groups said Tuesday they had failed to agree on a peacekeeping force to guide the country to democracy, but had ordered more talks to try to resolve their differences.

Officials of the African National Congress (ANC) and its rival Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), who ended one-day talks in Harare Monday night, said they had adjourned debate on the peacekeepers to allow for consultations and new talks later.

The peacekeepers are expected to be a neutral force that will police South Africa as it holds its first one-person, one-vote elections due next April. It could also form the nucleus of the country's future army.

"There were some differences on how to create the national peacekeeping force, but there was accord on the need for such a body because we all recognise the need to stamp out intimidation during the election campaign," ANC official Jeremiah Mambondo told Reuters.

He said the PAC, which broke away from the ANC in the 1950s, wanted the international community to contribute troops to the proposed force. The ANC, which opposed to this, also wanted guerrillas of black groups to participate.

"You can't call that irreconcilable differences. It was agreed that the military chiefs of both the ANC and PAC should hold consultations and set a date soon for further talks," he added.

Meanwhile gunmen lined up on an East Rand road Tuesday and ambushed a commuter mini-bus killing six passengers and wounding nine others, South African police said.

Shooting also broke out between local residents and dwellers in an adjacent migrants' hostel and one person was seriously wounded, police spokesman Captain Wikus Weber said.

The mini-bus taxi attack took place on the old Vereeniging Highway, running past Tokoza, a focal point of violence in Johannesburg's satellite East Rand township.

Police said 38 people had now died in the East Rand since Friday.

The attack on the light green mini-bus Tuesday — billed by the national peace campaign in South Africa as International Peace Day — was the latest in a series of recent attacks on taxis in the area.

"The gunmen were lined up waiting along the road and they opened fire. The driver lost control and rolled into the veld," Capt. Weber said.

He said it was not clear how many passengers had been hit by gunfire or killed or injured when the taxi overturned. The injured were taken to the Netalspruit Hospital in Tokoza.

One person was seriously wounded in subsequent cross-fire between hostel dwellers and local residents in the Tokoza black township, Capt. Weber added.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ciampi to quit once budget passed

ROME (R) — Italian Prime Minister Carlo Azeglio Ciampi said Tuesday he was ready to stand down once the 1994 budget law had been passed by parliament but only if a stronger government was ready to take over. "We are ready to hand over (power) but only if it means passing from a stable government to one which is even more solid," he told the lower chamber of deputies. The former central banker, who took office in April, had made electoral reform and parliamentary approval of next year's deficit-cutting budget the principal tasks of his government. Parliament has already approved the voting changes which will clear the way for early elections any time after December 21, the date on which the new rules become effective.

Andreotti quizzed over murder

ROME (R) — Italian prosecutors Tuesday began questioning former Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti in connection with the 1979 murder of journalist Mino Pecorelli, officials said. The case against Mr. Andreotti is based on allegations by mafia informer Tommaso Buscetta, now living in the United States under a witness protection programme, that Mr. Andreotti had ordered Mr. Pecorelli's murder. Mr. Buscetta told investigators that Mr. Andreotti, seven times prime minister, ordered the murder in order to prevent the publication of damaging revelations. Mr. Pecorelli was shot outside the offices of his magazine in Rome in March, 1979. In July, the Italian Senate voted to lift Mr. Andreotti's parliament immunity.

Ukraine premier's resignation rejected

KIEV (AFP) — The Ukrainian parliament voted Tuesday by a slim majority to reject Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma's resignation submitted 12 days ago. There were just 14 votes short of the 228 majority needed for the resignation to be accepted: 214 deputies voted for and 115 voted against. Mr. Kuchma submitted his resignation on Sept. 9 because deputies were severely criticising his economic reform programme. President Leonid Kravchuk asked him to stay on until parliament had voted on the issue. As the parliamentary session got underway Tuesday, some 7,000 Ukrainian demonstrators called for Mr. Kuchma to step down, in a protest organised by the nationalist Rukh Movement. A large police presence kept the demonstrators in line. The protesters also called for Ukraine to quit the Commonwealth of Independent States, which groups most of the ex-Soviet republics, for early elections to be called.

Christopher: U.S. rejects isolationism

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State Warren Christopher pledged Monday that the United States, to benefit its own economy and security, will stay engaged as a leader in world affairs. "There are American interests which will suffer if we're seduced by the isolationist myth," Mr. Christopher said. He spoke in New York and his text was made available here. "Why, you may ask, should we remain engaged in the world? First, because it's strongly in our economic interests to do so," he said. He said that in critical regions "the United States is the fulcrum on which peace and security rest." As an example he said that if democracy reverts to dictatorship in the former Soviet Union, Americans will pay a high price in a revived nuclear threat and increased defence budgets. "If ethnic conflict in Europe widens, if our security is threatened again in Asia, if terrorism spreads, if proliferation of mass destructive weapons is not checked, if any of these things come to pass, then our own security and our ability to focus on domestic renewal will be directly put at risk," he said.

Major arrives in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — British Prime Minister John Major flew in from Tokyo late Tuesday for a two-day official visit to Kuala Lumpur, during which he was to hold talks with Malaysian leaders on the conflict in ex-Yugoslavia. Mr. Major, accompanied by his wife Norma, Trade Minister Richard Needham and a high-powered delegation of officials and business leaders, was met on arrival by Foreign Minister Abdullah Badawi. It is Mr. Major's first visit to Malaysia since becoming prime minister in November 1990. He last visited Malaysia in his capacity as foreign secretary in 1989. Officials said Mr. Major was to hold talks Wednesday with Prime Minister Mahatir Mohammad on bilateral and international issues, highlight of which would be the Bosnian conflict.

Lithuanian defence minister quits

MOSCOW (R) — Lithuanian Defence Minister Audrius Butkevicius offered to resign Tuesday after a group of armed volunteers defected from the army, Balfax News Agency said. Balfax quoted Mr. Butkevicius as telling a news conference that President Algirdas Brazauskas had asked him to continue performing his duties while the resignation was being considered. About 60 volunteers seized 13 Kalashnikov guns and fled from their barracks near Lithuania's second largest city Kaunas to nearby forests. The rebels demanded more social benefits for the servicemen. They rejected an ultimatum from the Defence Ministry urging them to put down their arms and surrender.

Azerbaijan parliament votes to join CIS

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Azerbaijan has voted to join the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and to end a state of emergency imposed last April at the height of fighting with Armenian separatists, Interfax reported Tuesday.

The parliamentary vote came as Azerbaijan's interim president, Geidar Aliyev, prepared to attend a CIS summit, scheduled for Friday in Moscow.

Interfax said the state of emergency, which was ordered six months ago by then President Abulfaz Elchibey amid intensifying conflict in and around the disputed enclave of Nagorno Karabakh, would be lifted Wednesday.

In a breakthrough last week, Azerbaijan agreed to hold summit talks for the first time with leaders of the separatists in Nagorno Karabakh. Both sides agreed to extend a ceasefire in the region until Oct. 5.

Previously Azerbaijan authorities had refused summit talks with leaders of the enclave, insisting on dealing directly with Armenia in an attempt to end the more than five-year-long conflict.

Since the ouster in a military rebellion of Mr. Elchibey and the return to power of Mr. Aliyev, the republic's former Communist leader, there has been speculation that Azerbaijan would move to forge closer ties with Moscow.

Journalists in the capital Baku said deputies voted by 31 to 13, with one abstention, to return their volatile Transcaucasian state to the Commonwealth fold.

Mr. Aliyev, a former Soviet politburo member, assured deputies before the vote that he did not support the revival of the former Soviet Union.

"I am personally against the revival of the former USSR and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and I will do everything possible to lead Azerbaijan on the course of gaining real independence," he said.

"Azerbaijan will not allow any encroachment on its sovereignty,"

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The United Nations has reached "breaking point" because members are demanding more services but not paying their bills, Secretary-General Boutros Ghali said.

"The United Nations renaissance remains in question," he said in his annual report to the General Assembly, which opens its 48th session Tuesday.

Dr. Ghali described a world in turmoil with the big powers summing the U.N. to crisis areas they would not themselves touch.

"There is an undeniable disparity between the vision and the reality. This must be faced squarely by state members of the world organisation and the peoples they represent."

Angola: Rebels fighting all out for Cuito

SAO TOME (R) — The Angolan government said Tuesday that UNITA was ignoring a unilateral ceasefire the rebel movement declared this week and was still fighting all out to capture the besieged city of Cuito.

Angolan state radio and Portuguese News Agency (LUSA) also reported continued fighting in other parts of Angola, ranging from Quilengues in the southern province of Huila to Caxito, only 60 kilometres from the capital Luanda.

"The situation has not changed at all since UNITA declared its unilateral ceasefire (Monday)," Angolan state radio said.

"On the contrary, UNITA has launched attacks on Quilengues and has intensified the battle for Cuito," it said in a broadcast monitored in the island state of Sao Tome and Principe.

UNITA radio insisted that the

ceasefire was being observed and urged the United Nations to begin a fresh round of diplomatic contacts aimed at restarting peace talks.

But the government's military spokesman, Brigadier Jose Manuel "Jota" told state radio that UNITA's ceasefire offer was a sham designed to avert further international condemnation of the rebel movement and the armed forces would ignore it.

"We have past experience of identical statements by UNITA leaders who later step up their (military) action, attacking in order to obtain stronger positions before restarting negotiations," Gen. Jota said.

"The government will respond violently until UNITA abides by a real ceasefire," he added.

State radio's correspondent in Cuito, a provincial capital in the central highlands which has been

under siege for nine months, said there was fierce fighting Tuesday throughout the city.

The correspondent, Abel brio, said UNITA was "using all its military potential to intensify the fighting and the shelling."

He described Cuito, where the government says 20,000 people have died during the siege, as an "inferno."

There was no independent confirmation of the reported fighting in Cuito and Quilengues, but a correspondent of the LUSA reported from Caxito Monday night that there were constant skirmishes nearby.

Gen. Jota repeated the official line that the government would only accept a ceasefire based on UNITA's agreement to respect a collapsed 1991 peace agreement and its defeat in the elections that followed.

Poland's UD says no to ex-Communists

WARSAW (R) — Poland's ex-Communists, fresh from a weekend general election triumph, pressed ahead Tuesday with efforts to form a government after the outgoing ruling party rejected any possibility it might join a coalition.

Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka's centrist Democratic Union (UD) issued a statement saying it had no intention of taking part in what would be Poland's first leftist government since Communist rule ended in 1989.

The UD's refusal to negotiate dented attempts by the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) of ex-

Communists to lure centrist politicians into government to enhance its international image.

"The obligation to form a government and take the responsibility for governing the country falls on the parties which have won the elections — the SLD and PSL (Polish Peasants Party)," the UD statement said.

"These parties have awakened social expectations which the union thinks are impossible to meet in the current situation. The UD would not be able to share responsibility and does not intend to join the government they are forming," it said.

The statement, released after UD leaders met Monday night, confirmed earlier remarks by UD leaders ruling out cooperation with the former Communists.

Official results of Sunday's election were still unavailable but partial results showed the SLD was on course to win 173 seats — 37 per cent of the 460-member Sejm (lower house).

The PSL had about 27 per cent and the UD was trailing in third with about 15 per cent, the partial results showed. Another left-wing party, the Labour Union (UP), was fourth with about 10 per cent of seats.

U.N. has reached 'breaking point' — Ghali

Dr. Ghali said the organisation was often stretched beyond its financial and staff capacities while the big powers — presumably Security Council members Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — wavered in setting priorities.

"United Nations forces increasingly find themselves thrust into areas of conflict where major powers are not willing to venture themselves and are reluctant to make the hard choices posed by a new era of challenges to peace."

Financing 14 peacekeeping ventures alone is expected to cost \$3.6 billion by the end of 1993 for 80,000 troops, most of them in Cambodia, the former Yugoslavia and Somalia, Dr. Ghali said.

Only 10 states have paid all

their dues and peacekeeping expenses. Of the \$1.9 billion owed, the United States is in arrears for nearly \$800 million and Russia is in debt for \$500 million.

He pointed to the difficulty in raising funds for development aid since the end of the cold war because the "poorest countries no longer hold the same interest for the rich as they did in the previous decades of ideological competition."

Dr. Ghali said the Security Council, occupied with dealing quickly with crisis around the world, needed to hold periodic sessions at ministerial level to get some perspective on the "array of current challenges."

But Dr. Ghali said the world had recognised that the United

Nations could play a pivotal role in establishing world order, rescuing states in crisis and serving as a voice for the poorest countries.

He criticised the media for concentrating on peacekeeping to the near-exclusion of everything else.

"Though activities for development may not be as glamorous as peacekeeping operations, they are just as important, and indeed, provide the foundations for global security and stability," he said.

His report of more than 100 pages was the longest by a secretary-general. The main addresses by world leaders to the 184-member General Assembly start next Monday.

U.N. says Palestinians need \$7 billion to \$12 billion

Combined agency dispatches

GENEVA — The future of the Palestinian economy is at stake and up to \$12 billion will be needed in the next decade to rehabilitate the Gaza Strip and West Bank, according to a U.N. report released Tuesday.

The U.N. Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) report, "Developments in the Economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory," said the economic and social situation had continued to deteriorate between June 1992 to May 1993.

"Today, as much as before, the survival of the Palestinian economy is at stake as efforts are intensified for its revival amidst a host of longstanding constraints coupled with new pressures," the report said.

It urged measures including an end to the ban on Palestinian agricultural and industrial goods entering Israel, and reform of the income tax system to improve living standards.

"Unemployment and the need for job-creation have become perhaps the most overriding challenges now facing the Palestinian economy," the report added.

The amount of external financing depends on the number of Palestinians returning to the occupied territory under the accord on self-rule signed last week with Israel.

"According to preliminary calculations by UNCTAD, a minimum of \$7 billion will be needed, depending on the number of Palestinians who return," a spokeswoman told a news briefing.

Between \$3 billion and \$7 billion of public and private investment will be needed for the Gaza Strip alone, in addition to between \$4 billion and \$5 billion for the West Bank, according to the UNCTAD estimates.

Housing, transport and communications, as well as water and other utilities are priority areas for potential funding.

"The urgency of concerned and well-targeted international action to reverse economic and social decline particularly in the Gaza Strip cannot be overemphasized," said the report by Ghan-

suzakiz Kazemi.

The self-rule plan was agreed upon by the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) with Israel under a landmark peace agreement earlier in the month. The United States is organising a conference of donor governments to raise about \$3 billion to help rehabilitate the collapsed economic and social infrastructure of the Israeli-occupied territories.

The World Bank has estimated that it will take about \$3 billion to support the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A PLO plan calls for \$11.6 billion by the year 2000 with \$2 billion to start.

The UNCTAD report gave no details of how it arrived at its estimates. Mr. Kazemi is head of UNCTAD's Palestinian unit. UNCTAD acts as a forum for discussion on economic policy, growth and development issues and primarily represents the interests of Third World countries.

The closure of the occupied territory at the end of March had placed "yet another obstacle to the revival of the economy," the report said.

UNCTAD said the loss of income from work in Israel has been calculated at anywhere between \$1.5 and \$3-million daily during April. Unemployment rates in some rural areas and refugee camps topped 70 per cent April, the report said.

Prior to the sealing off of the territory, unemployment had reached levels of some 40 and 25 per cent in the Gaza Strip and West Bank respectively.

UNCTAD's trade and development board, composed of 138 member states, were to debate the report Tuesday as part of their autumn session being held in Geneva until Oct. 1.

In remarks prepared for delivery to the session, Mr. Kazemi said the Israel-PLO accord "provides a sound context for intensified efforts by the Palestinian interim authority to reconstruct and revive, over the coming years, the Palestinian economy."

Mr. Kazemi also suggested Israel and Palestine consider mutually beneficial trade arrangements.

"Various alternative schemes

might be considered, such as customs union, free trade area, differential tariff regimes or industrial protection policies, all of which are options that need to be viewed in the broader context of Palestinian trade with traditional and new partners," he said.

EC team in Oman

A delegation of European Community (EC) officials arrived in Oman Tuesday on the final leg of a Gulf tour seeking help in redeveloping Palestinian lands.

Diplomats in Muscat said that the delegation, led by Eric Derycke, Belgium's minister of state for development and cooperation, would meet Fahd Ben Mahmoud Al Saeed, the deputy prime minister for legal affairs.

The group earlier visited Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait.

Others in the delegation are Virginie Tsouderou, Greece's vice minister of state for foreign affairs, and Ole Loennsmeisen Poulsen, Danish vice minister of state for foreign affairs.

Dutch Ambassador Chris Saunders said the delegation was seeking financial support for the PLO-Israel agreement.

He said it was necessary that the Palestinians "see a tangible improvement in the situation as soon as possible."

Earlier in Kuwait, Mr. Derycke told reporters: "We should prove now to the Palestinian people that they can count on Europe and Arab countries."

He said aid would be used to provide housing, medical care and social services for Palestinians.

The U.S. has been soliciting from Europe, Japan and Arab countries to put together \$590 million to get development in Palestinian areas going.

The EC has allocated \$9 million European Currency Units (\$108 million) to assist Palestinians this year. Mr. Derycke said the EC also foresees 500 million ECUs (\$600 million) in aid from 1994 to 1998, about half in grants and half in "soft" loans.

Diplomats in the Gulf said they expected the oil-producing states to contribute about \$200 million.

U.S. to give \$250 million

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States expects to contribute \$250 million in aid and loans to a \$3 billion global effort aimed at supporting Palestinian self-rule in the impoverished Gaza Strip and West Bank.

The U.S. share of the aid would include \$150 million in technical assistance funds and \$100 million in loans, guarantees and equity contributions spread over two years, U.S. officials said Monday.

"Timely financial support is critical for the Palestinians as they begin building an economy," U.S. Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen said in a statement. "And technical advice also is vital as they take on the challenge of managing their own affairs."

Mr. Bentsen and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher plan to convene an international donors conference in the next few weeks to discuss aid for the breakthrough plan signed on Sept. 13 by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

"The real barrier to peace between the Israelis and Palestinians — the psychological barrier — has already been breached," Mr. Christopher said in announcing the conference at a speech in New York City. "Compared to that obstacle, the resource challenge we face can surely be met."

Mr. Christopher announced on date or place for the conference, but U.S. officials who declined to be identified said it will take place in Washington in early October, probably after meetings of the United Nations General Assembly in New York and the International Monetary Fund/World Bank in Washington.

Foreign and finance ministers from Europe, the Middle East and Japan are expected to attend. Mr. Christopher said the World Bank will play "a major coordinating role" in helping develop assistance to implement the plan for Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

The World Bank has estimated that \$3 billion will be needed over the next 10 years to make the plan work. A U.S. official who declined to be identified said \$300 million a year is probably all that the territories can absorb at first.



TEMPER FLARES: An Israeli borderguard loses his temper Tuesday in a heated argument with a Palestinian whom he accused of surreptitiously sticking a Palestinian flag on his back. The borderguard patrolled in East Jerusalem for more than half an hour with the flag hanging on the back of his black jacket (AP photo)

Arab League backs intifada, Syrian claim to Golan Heights

CAIRO (AFP) — Arab League foreign ministers wrapped up a three-day meeting here Tuesday with a pledge of continued support for the Palestinian revolt in the occupied territories and Syria's claim to the Golan Heights.

In a resolution, the ministers said they would provide "assistance to the intifada at all levels until the occupation of Palestinian land ends and the Palestinian people recover their inalienable national rights."

They invited the international community and aid organisations to step up assistance to Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories "to enable them to face up to their current difficulties."

The resolution pledging continued backing for the intifada came a day after the ministers welcomed the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) autonomy agreement, describing it as an "important first step" towards achieving an Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab land.

PLO leader Yasser Arafat, who addressed the foreign ministers on Sunday and appealed for support for the autonomy accord signed in Washington last week, said the six-year-old intifada will end as Israeli occupation ends.

Most Arab states have come

out in support of the PLO-Israel pact, under which the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho are to achieve autonomy next month.

In another resolution Tuesday, the ministers backed the "just demands of Syria and its right to recover the entire Golan" seized by Israel in 1967 and "annexed" in 1981.

They rejected "all measures adopted by Israel aimed at modifying the legal status of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan and its geographic and demographic configuration."

The Arab League wants the U.N. Security Council to force Israel to implement U.N. resolutions demanding a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan.

Syrian-Israeli peace talks have to date yielded no tangible results. The league further endorsed a report by the "Arab Committee of Seven," published Saturday describing Libyan proposals to the United Nations as "positive."

It expressed concern over

town of Lockerbie in December 1988 that killed 270 people. Libya has repeatedly refused demands for the men to be extradited to the United States or Britain, saying they would not get a fair trial.

An international air and military embargo imposed to force Tripoli to hand them over, and two other suspects wanted by France in connection with the 1989 bombing of a UTA airliner over Niger, is set to be tightened if there are no developments before October 1.

The "committee of seven," established by the League in 1992, is charged with handling the crisis between Libya and the West. It groups the foreign ministers of Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia.

The report conveyed to U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali said the two key Libyan suspects were ready to appear before a court in Britain or the United States provided they were given certain guarantees.

The Comoros islands, located in the Indian ocean off Madagascar, were also admitted as the 22nd member of the Arab League during the session which began here Sunday.

Twenty Arab states and the PLO are members of the league.

Israeli, Tunisian officials discuss talks on refugees

TUNIS (Agencies) — Israeli and Tunisian foreign ministry officials held a second day of talks here Tuesday to prepare for a multilateral meeting next month on the fate of Palestinian refugees.

Israeli delegation head Shlomo Gur said the talks had been "very positive up to now." The official Israeli visit is unprecedented, since Tunisia and Israel are officially in a state of war.

Mr. Gur, an advisor to Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin said Monday the talks were dealing with "the technical and material" organisation of the three-day refugee conference, scheduled to open here Oct. 12.

Tunisian officials said the aim of the Israeli mission was to "research the logistics for the visit of the Israeli delegation to the conference, which will be led by Mr. Beilin."

The gathering is part of the multilateral track of Middle East peace negotiations, focusing on economic, humanitarian and development issues, that were inaugurated under U.S. and Russian auspices in Madrid in October 1991.

The Tunisian government has not acknowledged the presence of a delegation from Israel.

Reliable sources said the Israeli delegation, comprising Mr. Gur, foreign ministry information Yosi Gal and administrative director Nissim Shetrin, was conferring with Said Ben Mustafa, Tunisian secretary of state for North African affairs.

Mr. Gur on Monday insisted

that the team had no plans to meet representatives of the Tunis-based Palestine Liberation Organisation, although sources here said the Israelis would in fact see PLO officials, including the organisation's chief delegate to Tunisia, Hakkam Balawi, and PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas.

Mr. Gur, a political adviser to Mr. Beilin, told the Associated Press he was pleased to be a part of the team.

"It's very exciting," Mr. Gur said by telephone from his hotel. "Yesterday afternoon we even walked around downtown, we went through the markets."

Asked why the Israelis sent an advance team to Tunis, Mr. Gur said that "as we do have an embassy here, we have to prepare arrangements for our delegation."

He said the three got a "businesslike" reception from Tunisian officials.

The visit came a week after Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) signed an agreement at the White House on self-rule for the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

"I am pleased to be here... it's a step forward in achieving peace in the area," Mr. Gal told the AP. There are an estimated 20,000 Jews living in Tunisia, despite the lack of diplomatic relations. The Tunisian government has long looked the other way while the Tunisian Jews visit back and forth with relatives in Israel.

Pope accepts Israeli invitation to Holy Land

ROME (Agencies) — One of the Israel's two chief rabbis said Pope John Paul II told him on Tuesday that "the time is approaching" for a papal visit to occupied Jerusalem.

Speaking to reporters after the first meeting between a Pope and a chief rabbi of the Jewish state, Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau told reporters he had renewed a standing Israeli government invitation for the pontiff to visit the Holy Land.

"The Pope himself mentioned that it was his wish to visit the holy places in the land of Israel," Rabbi Lau, who is spiritual leader of his country's Ashkenazi (Jews of European descent), said at Rome airport before flying home.

"I asked him about when and he said 'the time is approaching,'" Rabbi Lau added.

During their talks at the Pope's summer residence at Castelgandolfo near Rome, Rabbi Lau renewed an invitation Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres issued last year, a Vatican statement said.

The statement said the Polish-born Pope told Rabbi Lau, who is also a Pole, that he hoped God would allow him to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

"He (the Pope) said that he hopes to come. He didn't say when," Rabbi Lau added.

The last pontiff to make a trip to the Holy Land was Pope Paul VI in 1964 — three years before the war in which Israel seized East Jerusalem and the West

Bank, where many of Christianity's holy sites are located. A papal trip to the Holy Land is expected to follow the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and the Holy See, which diplomatic sources have said could come soon.

The Vatican has no formal ties with Israel — withholding them due to lack of internationally-recognised boundaries, a Palestinian homeland and problems over protection for the Catholic Church in Israel.

Israel's ambassador to Italy, Avi Pazner, said Tuesday that Vatican-Israeli talks on normalising relations had made "significant progress" in the wake of the Israeli-PLO accord. The talks began in July 1992.

Mr. Pazner said, "the conditions are now right to exchange ambassadors," adding, "I don't know exactly when it will take place."

But both Rabbi Lau and Vatican spokesman Joachim Navarro Valls stressed that Tuesday's meeting had dealt not with political questions, but with what they called spiritual matters.

Mr. Navarro, confirming the Pope's intention to visit Jerusalem, said John Paul II said he hoped they could "celebrate together the gift of peace in the Holy City of Jerusalem."

Mr. Navarro said no date for a visit had been discussed, as the Pope was waiting for "providence" to enable him to travel to the Holy Land.

3 U.N. troops killed; Rangers nab Aideed aide

Combined agency dispatches

MOGADISHU — Three Pakistani soldiers were killed and seven wounded when Somali militiamen attacked and destroyed their armoured personnel carrier Tuesday, a U.N. spokesman said.

The statement came as official confirmation of a report from other U.N. military sources that two men had died, seven were wounded and one had gone missing in the attack with a rocket-propelled grenade.

The attack occurred moments before U.S. Rangers landed a villa in a helicopter-borne operation and seized the right-hand man of fugitive Somali warlord Mohammed Farah Aideed.

Supporters of General Aideed,

who is wanted by the United Nations for attacks on peacekeeping troops by his supporters, warned of a massive attack on the U.N. headquarters if the aide, financier Osman Ato, was not released within four hours.

No such attack had occurred when the deadline expired at around 5:00 p.m. (1400 GMT). U.S. troops in the U.N. operation, in Somalia, UNOSOM II, have become embroiled in a guerrilla war with Gen. Aideed's militia, bringing to a halt much of the relief operation that the Americans spearheaded in an international mission which began in December.

The U.N. said militias attacked a Pakistani unit trying to clear barricades from a street near

Mogadishu's Benadir Hospital. A U.N. military source said two soldiers died, seven were wounded and one was missing.

Hours later, the U.N. announced it had snatched Mr. Osman Ato, in its most successful raid to date against the warlord's guerrilla network.

Witnesses said 50 U.S. rangers snatched Mr. Osman Ato by sliding down ropes from Blackhawk helicopters into Gen. Aideed's former militia headquarters in Mogadishu, which was bombed out by U.S. AC-130 gunship planes in June.

Mr. Osman Ato — Somali for "lanky" — has funded Gen. Aideed's militia, supplying it with arms and the local stimulant leaf qat, but he is not officially on the U.N.'s wanted list with Gen. Aideed for the June 5 massacre of

24 U.N. troops.

The U.N. statement, however, said he was among four men picked up and was regarded by the U.N. as "a principal adviser and financier to Aideed and his militia."

Somali militiamen fired at least a dozen rocket-propelled grenades at the U.N. helicopters, which fired back, killing some militiamen, the U.N. said.

One of the arrested men suffered a minor bullet wound. Osman belongs to Gen. Aideed's inner group, the Sa'ad sub-clan of the Habre Gedir. It was not clear whether the rangers' 10 a.m. raid was linked with the 7 a.m. battle in which Pakistani troops came under fire

PLO official confirms Jordanian promise

(Continued from page 1)

"We have no water, no power and no communications of our own," he said. "This is the reality today and we have to overcome this and assert our independence."

But the dependence on Israel will not stop the Palestinians from "insisting on our independent choice," he said. "The Palestinian (self-rule) authority will have the final say," in priorities for development and economic rebuilding in the occupied territories, he added.

The Palestinians will convey this message and state their position during a meeting of international donors to be held in the U.S. next month, he said.

They will also present their request for \$6 billion over three years in development assistance from the international community as opposed to the \$3 billion in 10 years envisaged under a World Bank report on rebuilding the West Bank and Gaza Strip, he said.

"Jordan will have a big role to play" in the rebuilding process, he said, without elaboration.

At another point, Mr. Abed Rabbo said the Jordanians and Palestinians faced "two options: Either we immediately start discussing visions for future ties and ignore immediate practical issues or we start from the level of coordination that we have established in the last two years."

He was referring to the proposal for a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation, which the King and Mr. Arafat have said could be discussed only after the Palestinians regain their total rights and are able to exercise the freedom of choice. Jordan has said Jordanians also have to be consulted over the proposal.

Replying to a question on how the Palestinians viewed the prospect of a confederation with Israel, Mr. Abed Rabbo said it was not an idea being entertained at all.

The PLO official, in comments obviously aimed at countering opposition to the agreement seen by hardliners as falling short of Palestinian aspirations, said the accord should not be characterised as limited to the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

"The Gaza-Jericho plan only implies the extent of immediate Israeli withdrawal," he emphasised. "The accord clearly states that the (to-be) elected Palesti-

nian (self-rule) council will have control over the entire West Bank and Gaza Strip in nine months after the council is elected."

Addressing another key issue of concern to Palestinians, Mr. Abed Rabbo said one was to negotiate the "modalities" of the return of up to 875,000 Palestinians displaced during the 1967 war.

"For the first time in 22 months of negotiations, Israel has agreed to include the principle of the return of the refugees," he said. "There is no question over the principle of the issue. We now have to negotiate the modalities."

He said a joint committee comprising Jordan, Egypt, Israel and the Palestinians will discuss the issue of the displaced people, "99 per cent of whom are in Jordan and Egypt."

Mr. Abed Rabbo did not directly address the fate of Palestinian refugees from the 1948 war, but he indirectly criticised Lebanon which has assailed the agreement since it did not address the issue of the more than 300,000 Palestinian refugees from 1948 now living in Lebanese territory.

"Lebanon should have welcomed the agreement since, for the first time, Israel has accepted to include the issue of refugees and displaced persons as an issue in the negotiations," he said.

In a leaflet distributed at the press conference, the Palestine Democratic Union (FIDA), a political party founded several months ago in the occupied territories under an initiative undertaken by Mr. Abed Rabbo, called for the implementation of U.N. Resolution 194.

Mr. Abed Rabbo was asked what guarantees the Palestinians had that the accord, signed by PLO Executive Committee mem-

ber Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres at the White House in a ceremony attended by Mr. Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, would be honoured by the Israeli side if there were to be political changes in the Jewish state.

He replied: "It is not a simple Israel-PLO agreement. The fact that it has been countersigned by the co-sponsors (of the Middle East peace process), the U.S. and Russia, makes the document an international contract which will be binding on the parties who signed it."

However, he said, the "best guarantee" was the support of the Palestinian people at large.

Mr. Abed Rabbo declined comment on the Syrian position on the accord. He would only say that "Syrian President Hafez Al Assad has said that he neither opposes nor supports the agreement."

The PLO official said the Palestine Central Council, a 100-seat body which liaises between the Palestine National Council and the PLO Executive Committee, would meet in the next two weeks to discuss and endorse the accord with Israel.

He invited the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, a fierce critic of the agreement, to attend the meeting.

"It is regrettable that our brethren in Hamas have rejected dialogue with the PLO," he said. "But we keep our door open for dialogue with all Palestinian groups within and outside the PLO umbrella."

Obviously directing his comments at Damascus-based Palestinian groups which are waging a campaign to foil the autonomy agreement, Mr. Abed Rabbo said: "There is only one Palestinian house, and that is the PLO house. All those who refuse to join the PLO house will be eventually left out and isolated."

King, Arafat set ground for

(Continued from page 1)

changed planes in Cairo and headed for China.

The King and Mr. Arafat held several rounds of talks Monday and Tuesday. The two leaders landed at Marka Airport in a helicopter that flew them from the Hashimiyeh Palace where Mr. Arafat was staying.

Seeing Mr. Arafat off from Marka after a farewell ceremony

were also His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Royal Court Chief Khaled Al Karaki, Deputy Prime Minister and Information Minister Ma'n Abu Nowar, Interior Minister Salameh Hammad and senior officials in addition to several members of the PLO Executive Committee and the Palestinian ambassador to Jordan, Al Tayyeb Abdul Rahim.

COLUMN

Programme for homeless in Washington outlined

WASHINGTON (AP) — Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros unveiled details of his \$20 million programme for aid to the homeless in Washington, a plan that circumvents shelters and connects homeless people with the services they need to survive. The programme eventually will be expanded to other U.S. cities, Mr. Cisneros said at a news conference Monday. He hopes to have it started by early 1994. At least 6,700 people are housed in Washington shelters each night. Their advocates say thousands more are turned away for lack of space. Washington officials say another 1,500 never go to shelters. Visitors are often shocked to see people begging or sleeping on the street near the White House. Other American cities have similar problems.

Menchu meets Japanese leaders

TOKYO (AFP) — Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu of Guatemala told Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa here Monday that she wanted to contribute to peace education, officials said. Mr. Hosokawa was quoted as saying in a 15-minute meeting with Ms. Menchu at his official residence that he hoped her visit here would help promote the protection of human rights by the Japanese people. Ms. Menchu, the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize winner who now lives in exile in Mexico, was quoted as telling Mr. Hosokawa that she wanted to return to Guatemala in the future. She fled Guatemala in 1981 after her parents and brother were reportedly murdered by security forces there. Ms. Menchu, here for a week-long visit, also met Japanese Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata Monday, officials said. She arrived in Tokyo Friday.

11-year-old girl sets off to fly cross country

AUGUSTA, Maine (AFP) — An 11-year-old took off early Monday in a small plane on a quest to become the youngest girl to fly across the United States. "I really don't think anything's scary about it," said Victoria Van Meter before setting out from the tiny Augusta Airport with her flight instructor, Bob Baumgartner. Victoria's parents and about a dozen other well-wishers gathered in the freezing cold and watched as the 6th grader lifted off in a single engine Cessna. Her east-west route to San Diego is the toughest way to fly cross country because of the prevailing headwinds, but she plans to reach southern California by Thursday. Baumgartner said Victoria, who aspires to become an astronaut, would be doing all the flying and navigating during the trip, as well as most of the radio communication.

Bangkok's dancing policeman breaks policeman stress

BANGKOK (R) — A Bangkok policeman has taken to break dancing on the job to try to cheer up motorists driven to despair by the city's horrendous traffic. "Doing this doesn't mean I have gone mad," Corporal Somchai told the nation newspaper during a break in his six-hour shift directing traffic amid the capital's noise, heat and pollution. "People are getting stressed out because of the traffic congestion," he said. "I know many motorists must wonder what I am doing when they see me jumping around. 'Some may think I'm nuts, others laugh. But once they think about my antics it gives them some relief from the traffic problems at hand. That's all I want.'"

Norwegian falls asleep between railroad tracks

OSLO (AFP) — A 20-year-old Norwegian escaped death by a hairbreadth Sunday when he went to sleep between the railroad tracks — and remained asleep when the train bearing him passed. Train driver Geir Kjelsberg told Norway's national news agency NTB that he suddenly saw the man lying on the sleepers, but was moving too fast to stop the train in time. Mr. Kjelsberg pulled the emergency brakes and ran along the tracks, leaving what he might see. Between the fourth and fifth coach he found the man, still soundly asleep. "He must have had a guardian angel. If he had woken up, he would no doubt have been killed," said the train driver. The man, still quite drunk, was taken to police station in Trondheim in mid-Norway.